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# Women in the Workplace

**Second Edition**

Target groups project



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Statistics Canada  
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**Nancy Zukewich Ghalam**

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# HIGHLIGHTS

- In 1991, 5.6 million women, representing 53% of all women aged 15 and over, were employed. This was up from 41% in 1975. In contrast, male employment fell from 74% to 67% over the same period.
- Married women have accounted for almost all of the growth in female employment over the last decade. The rate of employment among these women jumped from 47% in 1981 to 56% in 1991. However, married women still experience lower employment levels than married men, 71% of whom were employed in 1991.
- The employment rate of women with children, even those with pre-school-aged children, has increased quite dramatically since 1981. In 1991, 63% of mothers with children less than age 16 were employed, versus 50% ten years earlier. Similarly, the percentage of women employed whose youngest child was under age 6 rose from 42% in 1981 to 57% in 1991.
- The increased level of employment among women may be related to the fact that they are achieving higher levels of education. For example, in 1991, 40% of all women aged 15 and over had some post-secondary training, up from 25% in 1981.
- In 1991, 26% of all employed women worked part-time, compared with only 9% of employed men. In fact, women have consistently accounted for at least 70% of the part-time workforce in Canada over the past fifteen years.
- While 36% of female part-time workers indicated a preference for part-time employment in 1991, another 27% were unable to find full-time positions. Other women worked part-time because they were going to school (22%) or because of personal or family responsibilities (13%).
- Most women continue to work in traditionally female-dominated occupations. In 1991, 71% of women versus just 30% of men were employed in five occupational groups – teaching, nursing or related health professions, clerical, sales, and service.
- Only 29% of self-employed people were women in 1991, whereas women accounted for 80% of all unpaid family workers.
- Women have generally experienced higher rates of unemployment than men. However, during the recessionary periods of the early 1980s and the 1990s, female unemployment approached and even fell below male levels. For instance, in 1991, the unemployment rate of women was 9.7%, compared with 10.8% for men.
- Across the country, female unemployment is highest in Atlantic Canada and Quebec. In 1991, provincial unemployment rates for women ranged from 17.7% in Newfoundland to 7.1% in Saskatchewan.
- The earnings of women employed on a full-time, full-year basis in 1991 were just 70% those of comparable men. In fact, there has been little improvement in this earnings ratio since 1980, when women earned 64% as much as men.
- Employed women earn less than employed men, irrespective of their educational attainment. The gap closes, though, the higher the level of formal education. In 1991, earnings ratios for full-time, full-year workers ranged from 64% for women with some secondary schooling to 72% for those with a university degree.
- Employed women are less likely than men to be covered by some form of pension plan. In 1990, 39% of all paid female workers, compared with 50% of their male counterparts, were members of employer-sponsored pension plans. At the same time, just 62% of women aged 15-64 contributed to either the Canada or the Quebec Pension Plan, versus 80% of comparable men.
- Informal care arrangements were the main source of child care support for the vast majority of children receiving care to accommodate the work schedule of the parent most responsible for child care. Organized or regulated care services were the main form of care for only 11% of children.

- The availability of child care outside of daytime, weekday hours is very important to many employed mothers, since women are especially likely to work non-standard work weeks (weekends, evenings, or irregular hours). In 1988, 45% of employed parents primarily responsible for child care arrangements worked non-standard hours.
- Even when they are employed, women still maintain primary responsibility for household work. In 1986, employed women spent 3.2 hours per day performing unpaid household tasks, versus 1.8 hours for comparable men.



# INTRODUCTION

The increased involvement of women in the workplace has been one of the most profound economic and social changes in Canada over the last several decades. Currently, the majority of women aged 15 and over are employed, that is, they work for pay or profit; together these women represent almost half of the Canadian workforce. In fact, women have accounted for almost three quarters of all growth in employment since the mid 1970s.

While the proportion of women with jobs has increased dramatically, many of the characteristics of women's work experiences have been slower to change. For example, most employed women are still concentrated in traditionally female-dominated occupations. At the same time, women's earnings remain well below those of comparable men.

The entry of large numbers of women into the workplace has also engendered a number of new issues, not the least of which is the need for accessible, affordable child care. As well, even when they are employed, women are still primarily responsible for housework and family care.

This report focuses on these and other issues affecting employed women and their work experiences. The information presented here has been integrated from a variety of Statistics Canada sources to provide an overview of the employment, unemployment, earnings, employment benefits, child care arrangements, and activity patterns of employed women.

Of course, for many other women, looking after the household is their principal work activity. However, this work is not currently covered by national labour

market surveys. As a result, these women are not discussed in this report, except for a brief description of their time-use patterns included in the last section.

Most of the information in this report has been taken from Statistics Canada publications, although a number of series include previously unpublished data from sources such as the Labour Force Survey, the Absence from Work Survey, the Survey of Consumer Finances, the General Social Survey, and the National Child Care Study. Those seeking precise information on data comparability and data quality should consult the source publications directly or contact the Target Groups Project.

The information in this report is generally presented at the national level, although several provincial breakdowns are also included. In addition, historical data have been used to illustrate significant trends where applicable. As well, most series describing employed women are accompanied by "benchmark" comparisons with their male counterparts.

This report was prepared under the direction of Colin Lindsay, Target Groups Project Manager. The Target Groups Project gratefully acknowledges the assistance of Lisa Verdon in the preparation of this report. The Project also acknowledges the advice and guidance of Jack Scott. Mr. Scott was manager of the Target Groups Project from its inception until his retirement in November, 1992.

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# SECTION 1: EMPLOYMENT

## Rise in employment

One of the most dramatic trends in Canadian society has been the growing involvement of women in the workplace<sup>1</sup>. In 1991, 53% of all women aged 15 years and over were employed, up from 41% in 1975<sup>2</sup>. In contrast, male employment declined over the same period, falling from 74% to 67%. (Table 1.1)

As a result, women made up 45% of the workforce in 1991, compared to 36% in 1975. In fact, women accounted for almost three quarters (72%) of all growth in employment between 1975 and 1991. In this period, the total number of working women rose 65%, from 3.4 million to 5.6 million, whereas the number of men with jobs rose only 14%, from 5.9 million to 6.8 million.

The differences in employment trends among women and men reflect two distinct patterns. During years of relatively rapid economic growth, employment of women has grown substantially, while that of men has been relatively stable. In contrast, during recessionary phases, such as the 1981-1983 period and the early 1990s, employment among women has

either remained stable or dropped slightly, whereas it has plummeted quite dramatically among men. (Chart 1.1)

## More married women working

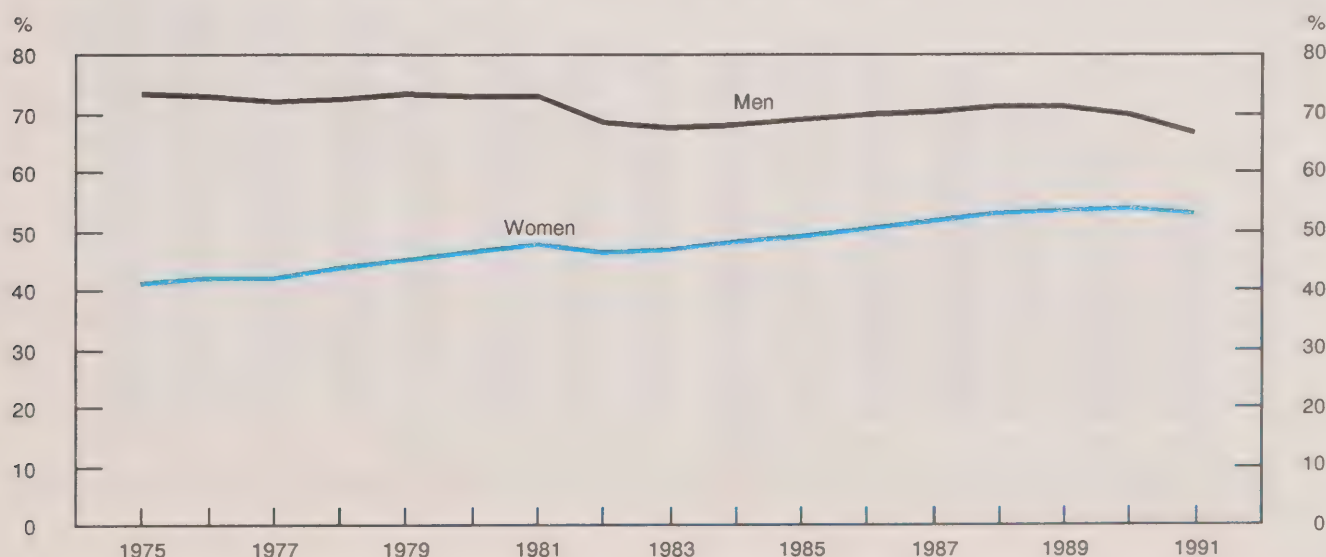
Married women have accounted for almost all of the growth in female employment over the past decade. In 1991, 56% of married women were employed, up from 47% in 1981. On the other hand, the employment level of single never-married women remained virtually unchanged in this period, while those of separated/divorced women and widows actually declined. (Table 1.2)

<sup>1</sup> Throughout this report, involvement in the workplace or workforce refers to employment. Statistics Canada's Labour Force Survey defines employed persons as those who have a job performing work for pay or profit. This includes paid work in the context of both an employer-employee relationship and self-employment. It also includes unpaid family work where the work contributes directly to the operation of a farm, business, or professional practice owned or operated by a related member of the household.

<sup>2</sup> These figures are often referred to as the employment/population ratio.

Chart 1.1

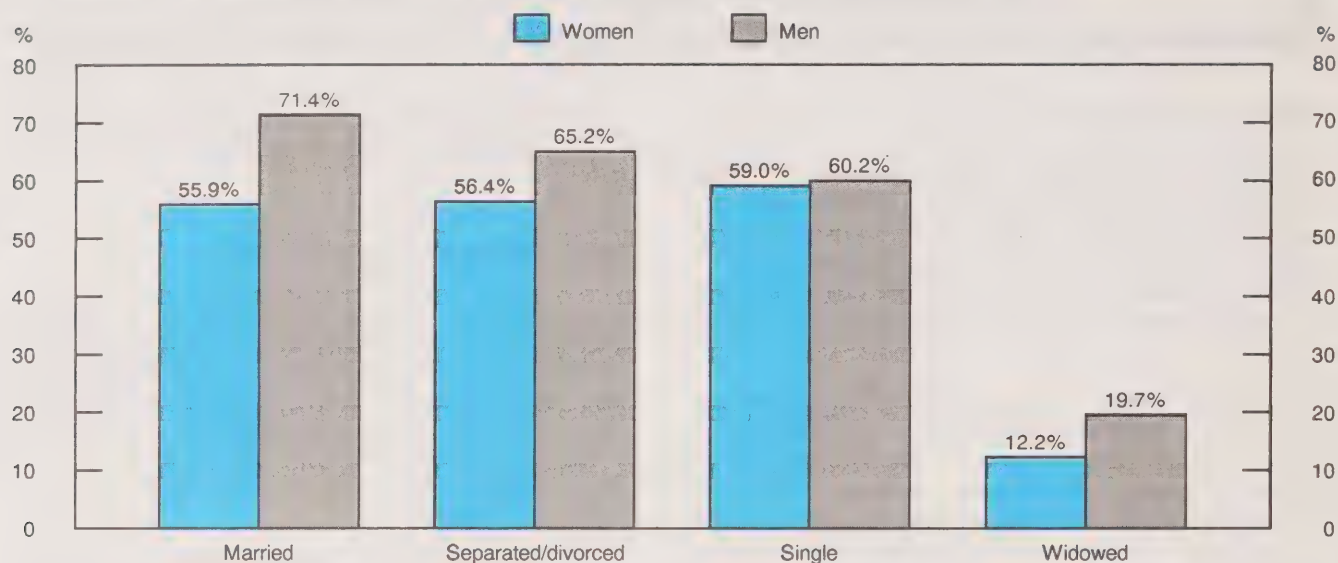
### Percentage of women and men employed, 1975-1991



Source: Statistics Canada, Catalogues 71-001, 71-220 and 71-529.

Chart 1.2

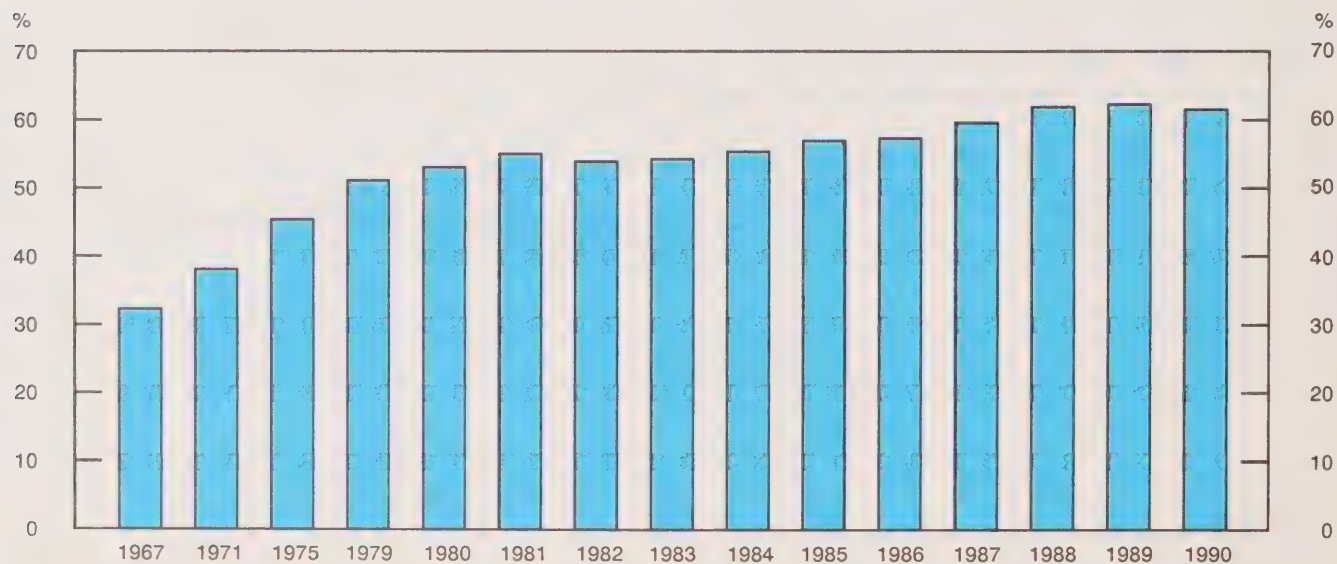
Percentage of women and men employed, by marital status, 1991



Source: Statistics Canada, Catalogue 71-220.

Chart 1.3

Dual-earner families as a percentage of all husband-wife families, 1967-1990



Source: Statistics Canada, Catalogue 13-215.



Although the share of married women joining the workforce has increased, they are still decidedly less likely than married men to be employed. In 1991, 56% of wives, compared to 71% of husbands, had jobs. (Chart 1.2) However, the gap is closing: in 1981, just 47% of wives versus 80% of husbands were employed.

Similarly, separated/divorced and widowed women also experience lower levels of employment than comparable men, although as with married people, these gaps have closed over the past decade. In contrast, there is currently little difference in the employment levels of single never-married women and men.

With the influx of married women into the workplace, both spouses are employed in the majority of Canadian families. By 1990, dual-earner families made up 62% of all husband-wife families, compared with 55% in 1981 and 32% in 1967. (Chart 1.3)

### Growth in the employment of mothers

There has also been very rapid growth in the employment of women with children. In 1991, 63% of mothers with children less than age 16 were employed, versus 50% in 1981. (Table 1.3) In contrast, just 45% of childless married women had jobs in 1991, up only four percentage points from 1981<sup>3</sup>.

There has been particularly dramatic growth in the employment of women with pre-school-aged children.

By 1991, 57% of mothers with children under age 6 were in the workforce, up from 42% in 1981.

Not surprisingly, though, the younger the children, the less likely their mothers are to be employed. Still, in 1991, over half (54%) of women with children less than age 3 and 60% of those with children aged 3-5 worked for pay or profit. In contrast, 69% of women whose youngest child was aged 6-15 were part of the workforce. (Chart 1.4)

### Age and employment

As with men, women aged 25-44 are the most likely to be employed. In 1991, 71% of women in this age group were involved in the workforce, compared with 56% of women aged 15-24 and 50% of those aged 45-64. (Table 1.5)

However, employment increased greatly among women of all ages between 1975 and 1991, rising twenty-two percentage points for women aged 25-44, thirteen percentage points for those aged 45-64, and six percentage points for women in the 15-24 age range.

Despite increases in their employment levels, (and concomitant declines among comparable men), women over the age of 24 are still considerably less likely than their male counterparts to participate in the workforce. On the other hand, there is currently no difference in the percentage of women and men aged 15-24 with jobs.

<sup>3</sup> Source: Statistics Canada, Catalogue 71-220.

### Female lone parents in the workplace

Female lone parents are considerably less likely than other women with children to be employed. In 1991, just 52% of lone mothers with children less than age 16 were employed, compared with 65% of mothers in two-parent families. (Chart 1.5)

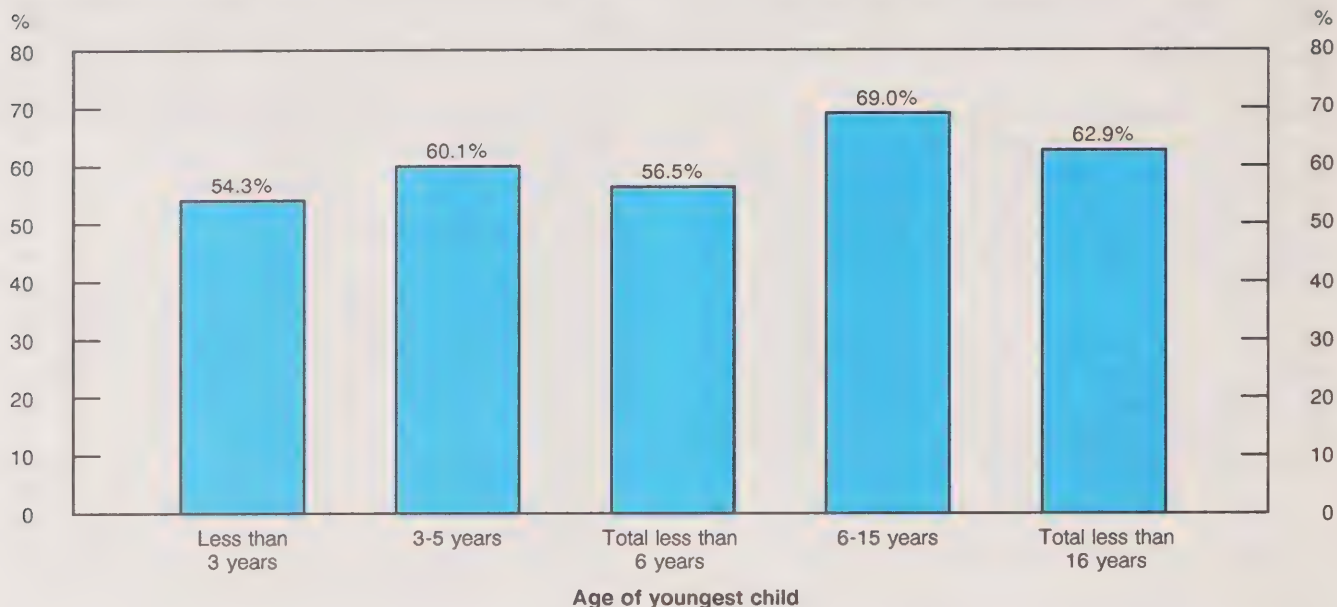
As well, the proportion of female lone parents currently with jobs (52%) is actually about two percentage points lower than it was in 1981 when 54% of these women were employed. This decline can be traced largely to substantial drops in employment levels among lone mothers

during the recessions in both 1981-1983 and the early 1990s, a trend contrary to that for women in general. While there were increases in their employment levels in some of the intervening years, these were not large enough to offset the declines during the two recessions.

The labour force activity of female lone parents is particularly influenced by the presence of young children. For example, in 1991, just 31% of these women with children less than age 3 and 47% of those whose youngest child was aged 3-5 were employed. This compared with 62% of those whose youngest child was aged 6-15. (Table 1.4)

Chart 1.4

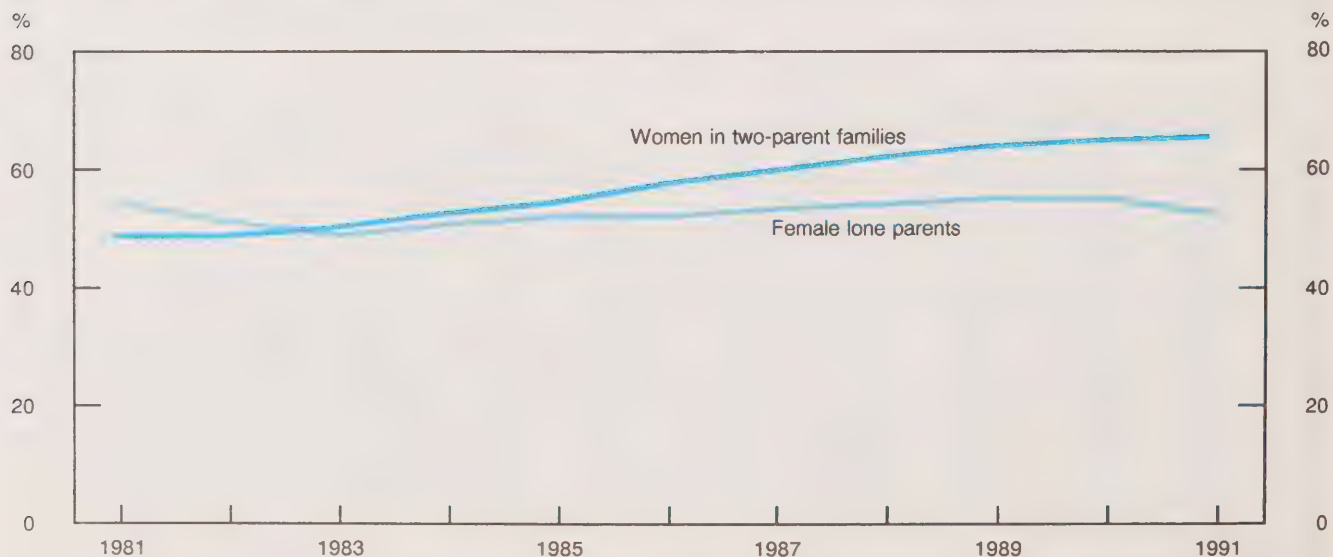
Percentage of women with children employed, by age of youngest child, 1991



Source: Statistics Canada, Catalogue 71-220.

Chart 1.5

Percentage of women with children employed, by family status, 1981-1991



Source: Statistics Canada, Catalogues 71-001, 71-220 and 71-529.



## Improved education

One factor explaining the increased employment of women is higher levels of educational attainment. For example, in 1991, 40% of all women aged 15 and over had some post-secondary training, up from 25% in 1981. A large part of this change was accounted for by an increase in the number of women with a diploma or trades certificate from a post-secondary institution other than a university. The share of women with this level of education jumped to 22% in 1991 from 11% in 1981. (Table 1.6)

The percentage of women with a university degree also increased over the 1981-1991 period, rising from 7% to 10%. While the proportion of women holding university degrees is still smaller than that of men (13%), this gap is likely to close since women presently make up the majority of undergraduate students in Canadian universities<sup>4</sup>.

As well, differences in educational attainment appear to have a greater impact on the employment of women than men. In 1991, the percentage of women with less than a Grade 9 education who were employed (19%) was only half that of comparable men (39%). This gap, however, shrinks among those with higher levels of education. For example, only around ten percentage points separate the employment levels of women and men with various forms of post-secondary education. (Table 1.7)

Even more significant, perhaps, is the fact that young women with post-secondary training are actually more likely than their male contemporaries to be employed. In 1991, 77% of female university graduates in the 15-24 age range were employed, versus 71% of comparable men.

## More women working part-time

Much of women's employment is part-time. In 1991, 26% of all employed women worked part-time, compared with only 9% of employed men. Indeed, women have consistently accounted for at least 70% of all part-time employment in Canada over the past fifteen years. (Table 1.8)

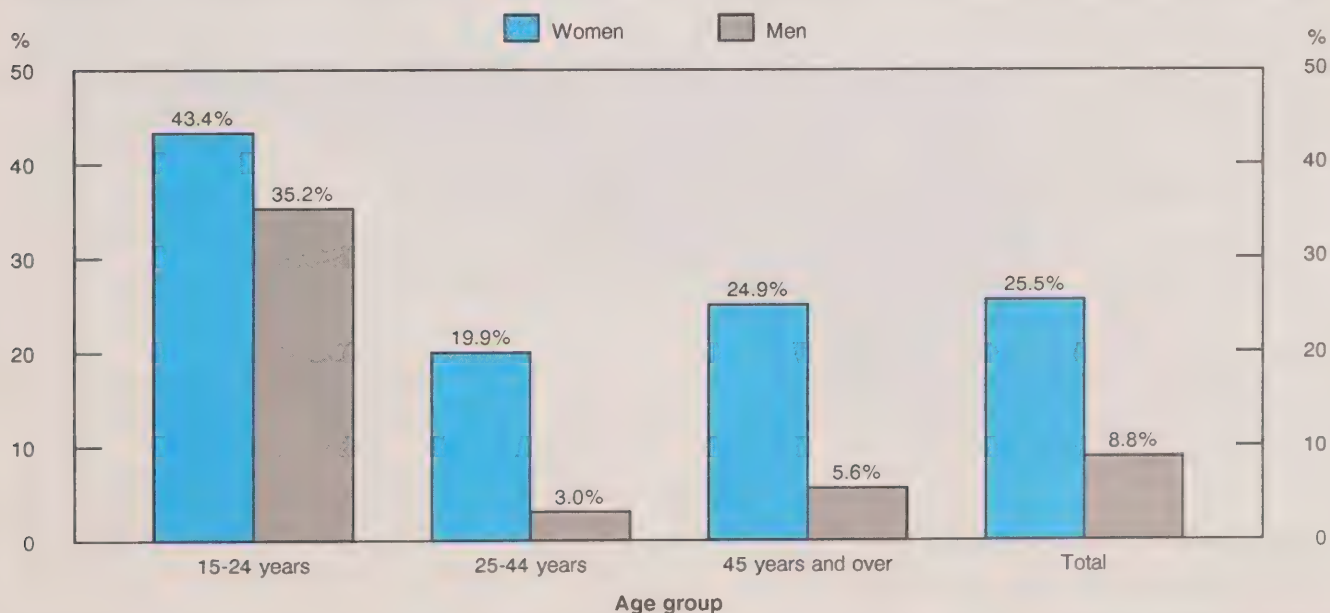
Many women, though, work part-time by "choice". In 1991, 36% of women employed part-time reported they did not want a full-time job, while another 22% were going to school. (Table 1.9)

However, significant proportions of women also settle for part-time employment either because they can't find a full-time position or because of personal or family commitments. In 1991, almost 400,000 women, 27% of all female part-time workers, indicated that they wanted full-time employment, but could only find part-time positions. Another 187,000, 13% of the total, worked part-time because of personal or family responsibilities.

<sup>4</sup> Source: Statistics Canada, Catalogue 81-229.

Chart 1.6

### Percentage of employed women and men working part-time, by age, 1991



Source: Statistics Canada, Catalogue 71-220.

Among both women and men, young adults are the most likely to work part-time. In 1991, 43% of employed women aged 15-24 and 35% of comparable men held part-time jobs. (Chart 1.6)

In contrast, while a large share of employed women over age 24 also work part-time, part-time employment is very rare among older men. In 1991, 20% of employed women aged 25-44 and 25% of those aged 45 and over worked part-time, whereas this was the case for just 3% of men aged 25-44 and 6% of those over age 44.

The reasons women work part-time also vary according to age. For example, the majority (66%) of women aged 15-24 working part-time in 1991 were still going to school. In contrast, the largest shares of women over age 25 employed part-time indicated that they did not want full-time work. In 1991, 40% of those aged 25-44 and 65% of those aged 45-64 cited this as the reason for part-time employment.

Women aged 25-44 were also the most likely to work part-time because of personal or family responsibilities. In 1991, nearly one quarter (24%) of women employed part-time in this age range did so because of personal/family responsibilities.

## Industry

Much of the increase in female employment over the past fifteen years can be related to changes in the basic structure of the Canadian economy. Since 1975, employment in the service sector, in which the vast majority of women work, has grown more than ten times faster than the predominantly male goods-producing sector.

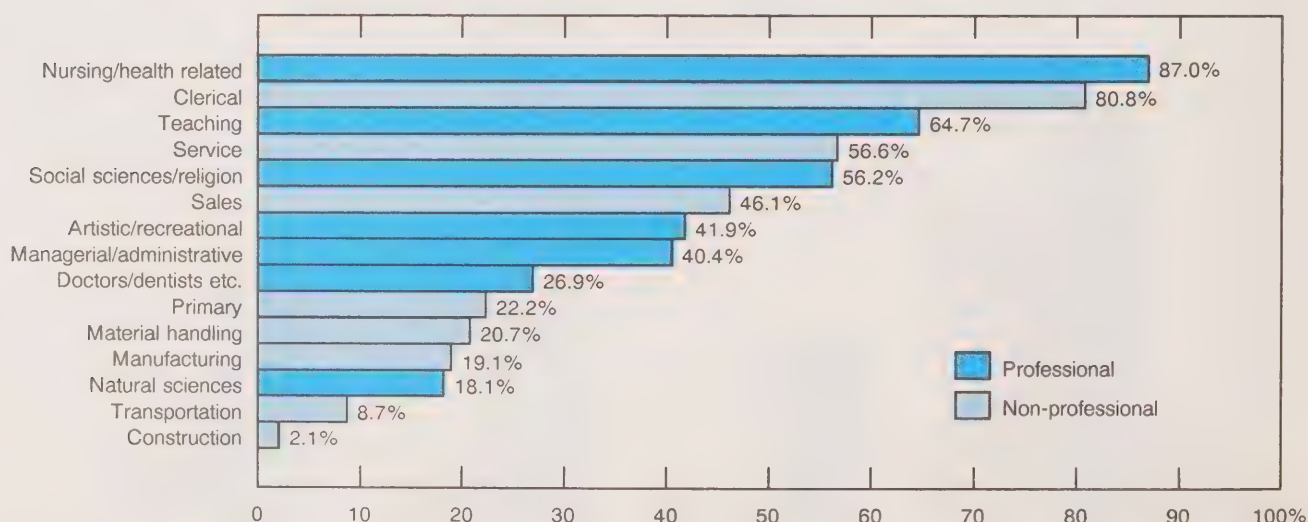
By 1991, 85% of employed women, compared with 62% of men, held jobs in the service sector. (Table 1.10) In fact, in 1991, women represented over half (53%) of all workers in the service sector, whereas they made up only about one quarter (24%) of total employment in the goods-producing industries. (Table 1.11)

## Occupation

Most women continue to work in traditionally female-dominated occupations. In 1991, 71% of women were employed in just five occupational groups – teaching, nursing or related health occupations, clerical, sales, and service. In contrast, only about 30% of employed men worked in one of these occupational groupings. The percentage of women currently employed in these areas, however, is down around five percentage points from the early 1980s. (Table 1.12)

Chart 1.7

### Women as percentage of total employment, by selected occupation groups, 1991



Source: Statistics Canada, Catalogue 71-220.



The largest single concentration of all female workers is in clerical occupations. This category accounted for 29% of female employment in 1991, compared with 6% of that of men. At the same time, 17% of employed women had service-related jobs, 10% worked in sales, 9% were nurses or related medical professionals, and 6% were teachers.

While the shares of women working in both teaching and nursing were slightly higher in 1991 than in the early 1980s, figures were down in the clerical and service areas. The most notable decline was in the percentage of female clerical workers, which dropped from 34% in 1981 to 29% in 1991.

Women have also made gains in several professional occupations other than teaching and nursing-related fields. In 1991, women accounted for 27% of all doctors, dentists, and other health diagnosing and treating professionals, up from 18% in 1982. The current figure, however, is still well below women's share of all employment (45%). It also pales in comparison with the fact that women make up 87% of nurses, therapists, and other medical assistants and technologists. (Chart 1.7)

There was also a sharp increase in the proportion of women employed in management and administrative positions. In 1991, 40% of those working in one of these categories were women, up from 27% in 1981. Indeed, 12% of all working women in 1991 were employed as managers and administrators, compared with just 5% ten years earlier. It should be noted, though, that as much as 40% of this increase may actually be attributable to changes in occupational definitions. Even without this artificial boost, though, there was considerable growth in women's employment in these areas.

Women also make up an increasing share of those employed as social scientists and religious professionals. In 1991, 56% of these professionals were women, versus 43% in 1981.

On the other hand, women remain very much under-represented in the natural sciences, engineering, and mathematics. For example, in 1991, women made up only 18% of professionals in these fields, up just slightly from 16% in 1981.

There has also been little change in the involvement of women in non-traditional goods-producing occupations over the past decade. In fact, the percentage of all working women employed in primary, manufacturing, construction, transportation, and materials handling jobs was actually lower in 1991 than in 1981. In 1991, 10% of employed

women worked in these trades, down from 13% in 1981. In comparison, these jobs accounted for 45% of total male employment in 1991, although this too was down from 50% ten years earlier. Overall, women accounted for just 15% of all employment in these occupations in 1991, ranging from 22% in the primary industries to only 2% in construction.

There is also considerable concentration of female workers in a few specific goods-producing sectors. For example, in 1991, roughly one in three (34%) women with a manufacturing job was employed in the fabrication of textiles, furs, and leather goods; in contrast, this was the case for only 2% of comparable men. Indeed, women made up 78% of all employees in these jobs, whereas they accounted for just 19% of all employment in the manufacturing sector<sup>5</sup>.

## Class of worker

Women are much less likely than men to be self-employed. In 1991, approximately 525,000 women worked for themselves, representing just 9% of all female employment. This compared with almost 1.3 million self-employed men, accounting for 19% of total male employment. As a result, women represented only 29% of all self-employed workers in 1991, a figure well below their share of total employment (45%). (Table 1.13)

Self-employed women are also less likely to own incorporated businesses than their male counterparts. In 1991, 24% of self-employed women were incorporated, versus 39% of comparable men.

Women make up the vast majority of unpaid family workers, that is, those whose unpaid work contributes directly to the operation of a farm, business, or professional practice owned or operated by a related household member. In 1991, eight out of ten unpaid family workers were women. Overall, however, this category accounted for just 1% of total female employment.

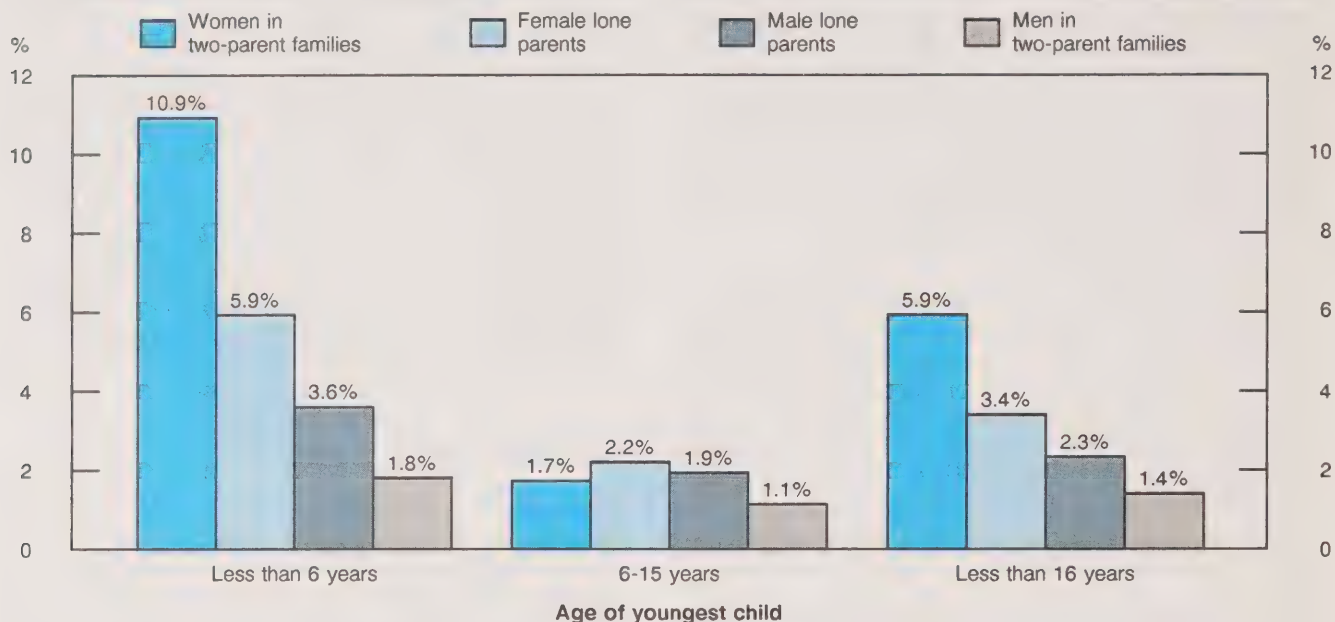
## Less tenure

Women tend to have less tenure at their job than men. In 1991, employed women had been at the same job an average of 74 months (or just over 6 years.) In comparison, men had an average tenure of over 100 months (or 8.7 years) per worker. (Table 1.14)

<sup>5</sup> Source: Statistics Canada, the Labour Force Survey.

Chart 1.8

**Percentage of parents losing time from work because of personal/family responsibility, by age of youngest child<sup>1</sup>, 1991**

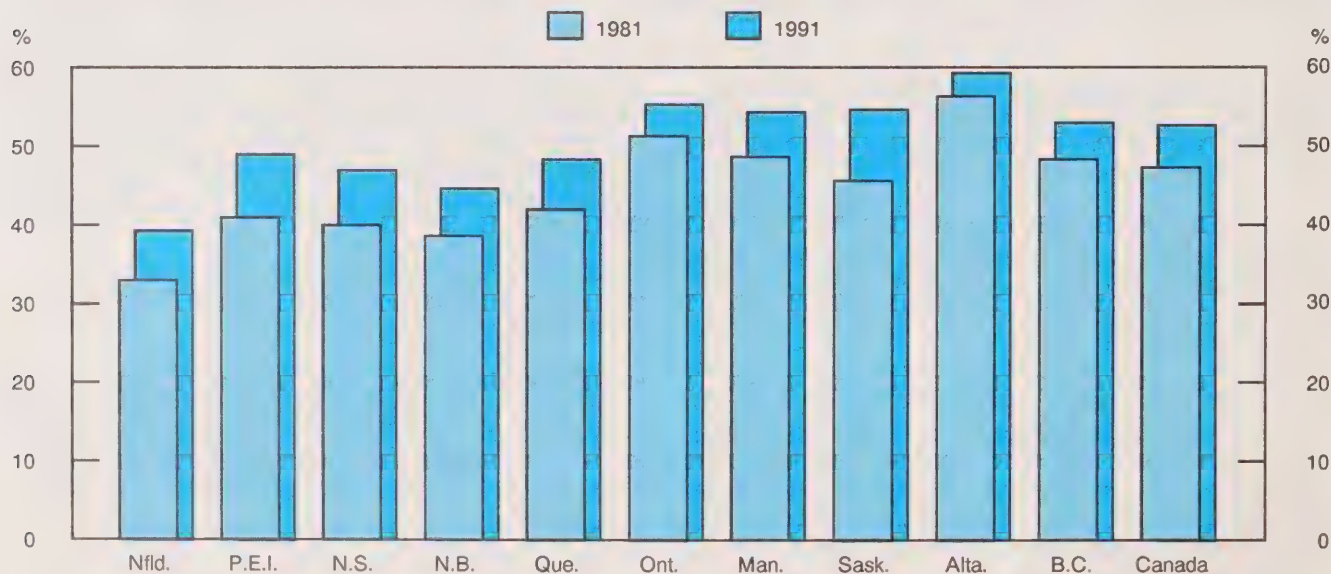


<sup>1</sup> Includes those with children less than age 16 living at home.

Source: Statistics Canada, The Labour Force Survey.

Chart 1.9

**Percentage of women employed, by province, 1981 and 1991**



Source: Statistics Canada, Catalogues 71-220 and 71-529.



In 1991, 61% of employed women had less than six years of tenure, versus 51% of men. At the opposite end of the scale, only 23% of women, compared with 35% of men, had job tenure of more than a decade. This was true even of the oldest segment of the labour force; among those aged 45 and over, just 46% of women, versus 62% of men had tenure of eleven years or more.

That women tend to have less tenure than men may be a result of the fact that, traditionally, many women have interrupted their work activity in order to raise a family.

### Absences from work

Despite a shift towards greater equality in responsibility for family financial support, women in Canada are still primarily responsible for family-related matters. This is reflected in the fact that women are more than twice as likely as men to be absent from work because of personal or family responsibilities. During an average week in 1991, 3.0% of all employed women, versus 1.2% of employed men, lost some time from work for these reasons. (Table 1.15)

In fact, the average number of days of work lost annually because of personal or family responsibilities has jumped quite dramatically among women over the past decade. In 1990, female workers missed 5.2 days per year due to these commitments, up from 4.2 days in 1985 and 2.9 days in 1980. Employed men, on the other hand, were absent from work for less than a day (0.9 days) in 1990 because of personal or family responsibilities. This figure is virtually unchanged from 1980 when male workers lost 0.7 days per year for these reasons<sup>6</sup>.

The presence of young children has a particularly strong influence on work absences of women. In 1991, 11% of women in two-parent families with at least one child under age 6 and 6% of comparable lone mothers missed time from work each week because of personal or family responsibilities. (Chart 1.8) The absentee rates drop to around 2% for both

lone mothers and dual-parent mothers whose youngest child is aged 6-15. All of these figures were higher than those for comparable fathers. In fact, the presence of young children had little effect on the work absences of fathers in two-parent families: 2% of these men with pre-school-aged children lost time from work, versus 1% of those whose youngest child was aged 6-15.

### Provincial distribution

Female employment levels vary widely across Canada. In 1991, the proportion of women in the workforce ranged from a high of 59% in Alberta to just 39% in Newfoundland. The percentage of employed women also exceeded the national average (53%) in Ontario (55%), Saskatchewan (55%), and Manitoba (54%), while it was the same in British Columbia (53%). In contrast, the level of female employment was under 50% in Quebec (48%) and in the Atlantic Provinces. (Table 1.16)

There was, however, considerable growth in female employment in most provinces between 1981 and 1991. Women in Saskatchewan experienced the greatest increase in employment levels; the proportion of these women with jobs jumped nine percentage points over this period. There were also increases of eight points in Prince Edward Island, seven points in Nova Scotia and Newfoundland, six points in Quebec and New Brunswick, and five points in Manitoba and British Columbia. The smallest increases were in Ontario (four points) and Alberta (three points). (Chart 1.9)

As with the general employment figures, the percentage of employed women working part-time also varies greatly from province to province. In Manitoba and Saskatchewan, 30% of all female employment was part-time in 1991, compared with 20% in Newfoundland. (Table 1.17)

<sup>6</sup> See "Absences from work revisited", by Ernest B. Akyeampong, in *Perspectives on Labour and Income*, Statistics Canada, Catalogue 75-001, Spring 1992.

**Table 1.1**  
**Total employment, 1975-1991**

	Women		Men		Women as % of total employment
	Total employment 000s	% of women employed	Total employment 000s	% of men employed	
1975	3,381	40.8	5,903	73.5	36.4
1976	3,513	41.4	5,964	72.7	37.1
1977	3,619	41.7	6,032	72.0	37.4
1978	3,830	43.3	6,156	72.2	38.4
1979	4,033	44.7	6,362	73.3	38.8
1980	4,249	46.2	6,459	73.0	39.7
1981	4,445	47.4	6,556	72.9	40.4
1982	4,382	46.1	6,236	68.5	41.3
1983	4,472	46.5	6,203	67.5	41.9
1984	4,624	47.6	6,308	68.0	42.3
1985	4,794	48.8	6,428	68.7	42.7
1986	4,964	49.9	6,567	69.5	43.1
1987	5,152	51.2	6,709	70.1	43.4
1988	5,368	52.6	6,876	70.9	43.8
1989	5,508	53.3	6,977	71.1	44.1
1990	5,624	53.7	6,948	69.8	44.7
1991	5,589	52.6	6,751	66.7	45.3

Source: Statistics Canada, Catalogues 71-001, 71-220 and 71-529.

**Table 1.2**  
**Percentage of women and men employed, by marital status, 1981-1991**

	Single		Married		Separated/ divorced		Widowed		Total	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
%										
1981	58.1	61.8	46.8	79.7	58.9	72.1	17.5	24.8	47.4	72.9
1982	55.1	55.4	46.2	76.0	56.5	68.7	16.1	23.6	46.1	68.5
1983	55.3	55.0	46.8	74.9	55.5	64.0	15.7	24.7	46.5	67.5
1984	56.4	57.0	48.4	74.9	56.2	65.4	14.9	24.9	47.6	68.0
1985	58.1	58.8	49.6	75.1	56.5	65.6	15.0	24.7	48.8	68.7
1986	58.6	60.9	51.4	75.1	55.8	67.5	13.9	24.1	49.9	69.5
1987	60.4	63.6	52.6	74.8	57.6	68.6	14.2	24.4	51.2	70.1
1988	62.0	65.1	54.4	75.4	59.1	69.1	13.1	22.4	52.6	70.9
1989	62.4	66.1	55.5	75.2	60.2	68.9	13.3	22.7	53.3	71.1
1990	61.9	64.3	56.4	74.1	58.9	66.0	13.1	19.6	53.7	69.8
1991	59.0	60.2	55.9	71.4	56.4	65.2	12.2	19.7	52.6	66.7

Source: Statistics Canada, Catalogues 71-001, 71-220 and 71-529.



Table 1.3

## Percentage of women with children employed, by age of youngest child, 1981-1991

	Youngest child less than 3 years	Youngest child 3-5 years	Total with youngest child less than 6 years	Youngest child 6-15 years	Total with children less than 16 years
	%				
1981	39.1	46.8	42.0	56.6	49.5
1982	39.2	46.3	41.9	55.4	48.8
1983	41.7	47.8	44.1	55.2	49.7
1984	44.1	49.2	46.1	57.5	52.0
1985	46.6	52.1	48.7	59.0	54.0
1986	49.2	54.5	51.3	61.9	56.7
1987	50.4	56.3	52.8	64.0	58.5
1988	51.7	58.3	54.3	66.7	60.6
1989	54.4	60.9	56.9	69.6	63.3
1990	53.3	59.5	55.7	70.2	63.1
1991	54.3	60.1	56.5	69.0	62.9

Source: Statistics Canada, Catalogues 71-001, 71-220 and 71-529.

Table 1.4

## Labour force characteristics of women with children, by age of youngest child, 1991

	Youngest child less than 3 years	Youngest child 3-5 years	Youngest child 6-15 years	Total with children less than 16 years
	%			
<b>% employed</b>				
Lone parents	30.8	47.4	62.2	52.2
Women in two-parent families	56.9	62.3	70.3	64.6
<b>Unemployment rate</b>				
Lone parents	25.5	20.4	13.8	16.8
Women in two-parent families	10.9	10.4	8.7	9.6
<b>% not in the labour force</b>				
Lone parents	58.6	40.7	28.0	37.4
Women in two-parent families	36.1	30.1	23.1	28.5
<b>% employed part-time<sup>1</sup></b>				
Lone parents	25.8	23.3	16.4	19.4
Women in two-parent families	32.4	32.0	26.4	29.1

<sup>1</sup> Expressed as a percentage of total employed.

Source: Statistics Canada, Catalogue 71-220.

**Table 1.5**  
**Percentage of women and men employed, by age, 1975-1991**

	People aged							
	15-24		25-44		45-64		Total <sup>1</sup>	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
	%							
1975	50.3	60.2	48.6	91.4	37.3	83.6	40.8	73.5
1976	50.0	58.9	49.6	91.3	38.9	82.5	41.4	72.7
1977	49.6	58.7	50.9	90.5	38.9	81.5	41.7	72.0
1978	50.8	59.3	53.6	90.5	40.0	81.5	43.3	72.2
1979	53.2	61.9	55.3	91.3	41.2	81.9	44.7	73.3
1980	54.7	62.0	57.9	90.6	41.9	81.7	46.2	73.0
1981	55.4	62.1	60.2	90.6	42.9	81.2	47.4	72.9
1982	52.2	54.7	59.3	86.0	42.3	77.8	46.1	68.5
1983	52.2	53.8	60.3	84.6	42.6	76.6	46.5	67.5
1984	53.5	56.3	62.3	84.9	42.7	75.5	47.6	68.0
1985	55.5	57.2	63.6	86.1	44.1	75.2	48.8	68.7
1986	56.8	59.4	66.3	86.7	44.0	75.5	49.9	69.5
1987	58.2	61.1	67.7	87.3	46.2	75.3	51.2	70.1
1988	59.6	62.9	69.5	88.3	48.4	75.7	52.6	70.9
1989	60.6	64.0	70.6	88.2	49.0	75.7	53.3	71.1
1990	59.0	61.2	71.6	87.0	50.3	74.6	53.7	69.8
1991	56.4	56.0	70.6	83.7	50.2	72.3	52.6	66.7

<sup>1</sup> Includes those aged 65 and over.

Source: Statistics Canada, Catalogues 71-001, 71-220 and 71-529.

**Table 1.6**  
**Educational distribution of women and men aged 15 years and over, 1981 and 1991**

	Women		Men	
	1981	1991	1981	1991
	%			
Educational attainment:				
Less than grade 9	21.9	14.5	23.0	14.2
Grades 9-13: <sup>1</sup>	53.1	45.2	49.3	42.2
Some secondary school	..	22.7	..	23.1
High school diploma	..	22.4	..	19.2
Some post-secondary	7.4	8.8	8.3	8.8
Post-secondary certificate or diploma <sup>2</sup>	11.1	21.8	9.0	22.0
University degree	6.5	9.7	10.5	12.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>Total (000s)</b>	<b>9,374</b>	<b>10,629</b>	<b>8,994</b>	<b>10,117</b>

<sup>1</sup> Detailed breakdown not available for this category in 1981.

<sup>2</sup> Includes trades certificate.

Source: Statistics Canada, Catalogues 71-220 and 71-529.



Table 1.7

## Percentage of women and men employed, by age and education, 1991

	People aged							
	15-24		25-44		45 and over		Total	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
	%							
Educational attainment:								
Less than grade 9	22.6	33.3	41.9	60.6	14.5	34.5	19.0	38.9
Some secondary school	42.5	46.5	54.6	75.3	28.0	49.1	39.9	56.7
High school diploma	65.4	68.3	70.4	85.0	38.7	55.8	58.8	72.9
Some post-secondary	61.4	60.4	71.1	83.9	43.5	60.9	61.9	70.8
Post-secondary certificate or diploma <sup>1</sup>	75.5	69.2	78.4	87.4	46.6	64.2	67.6	78.0
University degree	76.5	71.2	82.3	91.7	59.8	74.0	75.9	84.3

<sup>1</sup> Includes trades certificate.

Source: Statistics Canada, the Labour Force Survey.

Table 1.8

## Part-time employment, 1975-1991

	Women employed part-time 000s	% of women employed part-time <sup>1</sup>	% of men employed part-time <sup>1</sup>	Women as % of total part- time employment
1975	687	20.3	5.1	69.5
1976	741	21.1	5.1	70.8
1977	800	22.1	5.4	70.9
1978	867	22.6	5.5	71.9
1979	938	23.3	5.7	72.1
1980	1,011	23.8	5.9	72.6
1981	1,074	24.2	6.3	72.3
1982	1,100	25.1	6.9	72.0
1983	1,169	26.1	7.6	71.3
1984	1,187	25.7	7.6	71.2
1985	1,251	26.1	7.6	72.0
1986	1,274	25.7	7.8	71.2
1987	1,294	25.1	7.6	71.7
1988	1,355	25.2	7.7	72.0
1989	1,352	24.5	7.7	71.6
1990	1,371	24.4	8.1	71.0
1991	1,425	25.4	8.8	70.4

<sup>1</sup> Expressed as a percentage of total employed.

Source: Statistics Canada, Catalogues 71-001, 71-220 and 71-529.

**Table 1.9**  
**Reasons for part-time work, by age, 1991**

	Women aged				Men aged			
	15-24	25-44	45 and over	Total	15-24	25-44	45 and over	Total
	%							
Personal/family responsibility	2.2	23.7	7.5	13.1	--	--	--	1.0
Going to school	65.8	3.4	--	22.3	72.2	18.2	--	48.6
Could only find part-time work	22.5	31.0	24.6	26.9	20.3	61.8	30.1	29.8
Did not want full-time work	9.2	40.0	64.6	36.3	6.7	11.8	58.4	17.4
Other reasons	--	1.7	2.6	1.5	--	6.4	8.8	3.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>Total (000s)</b>	<b>448</b>	<b>632</b>	<b>345</b>	<b>1,425</b>	<b>374</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>597</b>
% employed part-time <sup>1</sup>	43.4	19.9	24.9	25.5	35.2	3.0	5.6	8.8

<sup>1</sup> Expressed as a percentage of total employed.

Source: Statistic Canada, Catalogue 71-220.

**Table 1.10**  
**Distribution of employment, by industry, 1975-1991**

	Women			Men		
	Service	Goods-producing	Total	Service	Goods-producing	Total
	%					
1975	81.6	18.4	100.0	56.7	43.3	100.0
1976	81.0	19.0	100.0	56.5	43.4	100.0
1977	82.0	18.0	100.0	57.3	42.7	100.0
1978	82.0	18.0	100.0	57.2	42.8	100.0
1979	81.4	18.5	100.0	57.1	42.9	100.0
1980	81.6	18.4	100.0	57.7	42.3	100.0
1981	81.5	18.4	100.0	55.9	44.1	100.0
1982	82.7	17.3	100.0	58.0	42.0	100.0
1983	82.6	17.4	100.0	59.1	40.9	100.0
1984	82.7	17.3	100.0	58.7	41.3	100.0
1985	83.2	16.8	100.0	59.2	40.8	100.0
1986	83.2	16.8	100.0	59.8	40.2	100.0
1987	83.8	16.2	100.0	59.4	40.5	100.0
1988	83.6	16.4	100.0	59.1	40.9	100.0
1989	83.9	16.1	100.0	59.1	40.9	100.0
1990	84.6	15.4	100.0	60.2	39.8	100.0
1991	85.2	14.8	100.0	61.5	38.4	100.0

Source: Statistics Canada, Catalogues 71-001, 71-220 and 71-529.



Table 1.11

## Total employment, by industry, 1975-1991

	Women		Men		Women as % of total employment	
	Service	Goods-producing	Service	Goods-producing	Service	Goods-producing
	000s					
1975	2,758	623	3,349	2,554	45.2	19.6
1976	2,845	668	3,370	2,594	45.8	20.4
1977	2,966	653	3,457	2,575	46.2	20.2
1978	3,142	689	3,521	2,636	47.2	20.7
1979	3,286	747	3,635	2,727	47.4	21.5
1980	3,469	780	3,725	2,734	48.2	22.0
1981	3,623	822	3,667	2,889	49.7	22.2
1982	3,623	759	3,619	2,617	50.0	22.4
1983	3,695	777	3,664	2,539	50.2	23.4
1984	3,823	802	3,705	2,602	50.8	23.6
1985	3,988	805	3,808	2,620	51.2	23.5
1986	4,129	835	3,925	2,642	51.3	24.0
1987	4,315	837	3,991	2,718	52.0	23.5
1988	4,486	882	4,062	2,814	52.4	23.9
1989	4,620	888	4,125	2,852	52.8	23.7
1990	4,760	864	4,186	2,762	53.2	23.8
1991	4,762	827	4,155	2,596	53.4	24.2

Source: Statistics Canada, Catalogues 71-001, 71-220 and 71-529.

Table 1.12

## Distribution of employment, by occupation, 1981 and 1991

	1981			1991		
	Women	Men	Women as % of employment	Women	Men	Women as % of employment
	%					
Managerial/administrative	5.4	9.9	27.4	12.0	14.7	40.4
Natural sciences	1.4	5.2	15.6	1.6	5.9	18.1
Social sciences/religion	1.8	1.6	42.6	2.9	1.9	56.2
Teaching	5.8	3.0	56.7	6.4	2.9	64.7
Doctors/dentists etc.	0.3 <sup>1</sup>	0.8 <sup>1</sup>	18.3 <sup>1</sup>	0.4	0.8	26.9
Nursing/therapy/other health related	8.9 <sup>1</sup>	1.1 <sup>1</sup>	85.1 <sup>1</sup>	9.3	1.1	87.0
Artistic/literary/recreational	1.4	1.4	39.5	1.7	2.0	41.9
Clerical	34.3	6.4	78.4	29.3	5.8	80.8
Sales	10.1	10.4	39.5	9.8	9.5	46.1
Service	18.3	10.1	55.0	16.6	10.5	56.6
Primary	2.9	8.4	18.9	2.4	6.9	22.2
Manufacturing	7.3	20.5	19.4	5.0	17.4	19.1
Construction	0.2	10.0	1.4	0.3	9.6	2.1
Transport equipment operating	0.6	5.9	6.1	0.7	6.1	8.7
Material handling/other crafts	1.8	5.2	18.9	1.5	4.8	20.7
Total	100.0	100.0	40.4	100.0	100.0	45.3
<b>Total (000s)</b>	<b>4,445</b>	<b>6,556</b>	<b>...</b>	<b>5,589</b>	<b>6,751</b>	<b>...</b>

<sup>1</sup> Figures are for 1982.

Source: Statistics Canada, Catalogues 71-220 and 71-529, and the Labour Force Survey.

**Table 1.13**  
**Employment, by class of worker, 1991**

	Women		Men		Total		Women as a % of total
	000s	%	000s	%	000s	%	
Employees	5,014	89.7	5,477	81.1	10,490	85.0	47.8
Self-employed							
Incorporated	128	2.3	492	7.3	620	5.0	20.6
Unincorporated	397	7.1	771	11.4	1,168	9.4	34.0
Total self-employed	525	9.4	1,263	18.7	1,788	14.4	29.4
Unpaid family worker	51	0.9	12	0.2	63	0.5	81.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,589</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>6,751</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>12,340</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>45.3</b>

Source: Statistics Canada, Catalogue 71-220.

**Table 1.14**  
**Job tenure, by age, 1991**

	Tenure				Total	Average tenure (months)
	Less than 12 months	1-5 years	6-10 years	11 years and over		
	%					
Women aged:						
15-24	53.2	42.7	3.9	--	100.0	17.6
25-44	21.9	38.7	18.6	20.9	100.0	66.9
45 and over	13.1	23.4	17.4	46.2	100.0	131.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>25.4</b>	<b>35.7</b>	<b>15.5</b>	<b>23.3</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>73.7</b>
Men aged:						
15-24	53.7	41.3	4.8	--	100.0	18.2
25-44	19.0	32.3	19.1	29.6	100.0	82.7
45 and over	10.2	15.6	12.4	61.8	100.0	190.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>21.8</b>	<b>28.8</b>	<b>14.9</b>	<b>34.6</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>104.5</b>

Source: Statistics Canada, Catalogue 71-220.



Table 1.15

## Absences from work due to personal or family responsibilities, 1980-1991

	Women		Men	
	Average days lost per year	% losing time per week	Average days lost per year	% losing time per week
1980	2.9	..	0.7	..
1981	3.2	2.2	0.7	1.1
1982	3.1	2.1	0.7	1.1
1983	3.8	2.4	0.8	1.2
1984	4.2	2.4	0.8	1.2
1985	4.2	2.5	0.8	1.1
1986	4.4	2.6	0.8	1.2
1987	4.3	2.6	0.8	1.1
1988	4.7	2.8	0.9	1.3
1989	5.1	3.1	0.9	1.4
1990	5.2	3.1	0.9	1.4
1991	..	3.0	..	1.2

Source: Statistics Canada, Catalogues 71-001, 71-220 and 71-529, and the Labour Force Survey.

Table 1.16

## Percentage of women and men employed, by province, 1975-1991

	1975		1981		1986		1991	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
	%							
Newfoundland	26.6	57.9	32.9	57.8	34.4	51.9	39.4	50.9
Prince Edward Island	37.4	67.1	41.0	63.9	45.5	62.3	49.0	59.6
Nova Scotia	35.7	67.3	40.1	63.8	42.5	61.5	47.0	61.5
New Brunswick	33.7	63.8	38.5	61.5	41.1	57.8	44.7	57.9
Quebec	36.5	72.0	42.0	68.9	45.0	66.7	48.2	63.9
Ontario	44.8	76.0	51.4	75.6	54.3	73.8	55.3	68.5
Manitoba	41.0	75.9	48.8	73.8	52.2	71.0	54.2	68.1
Saskatchewan	38.5	76.4	45.8	75.4	52.0	71.2	54.7	69.9
Alberta	47.0	79.6	56.4	82.1	56.8	73.4	59.4	73.7
British Columbia	41.0	71.1	48.2	73.6	47.8	66.8	53.0	67.0
<b>Canada</b>	<b>40.8</b>	<b>73.5</b>	<b>47.4</b>	<b>72.9</b>	<b>49.9</b>	<b>69.5</b>	<b>52.6</b>	<b>66.7</b>

Source: Statistics Canada, Catalogues 71-001, 71-220 and 71-529.

Table 1.17

## Percentage of employed women and men working part-time, by province, 1991

	Women	Men	Women as % of total part-time employment
	%		
Newfoundland	19.5	6.4	70.8
Prince Edward Island	25.0	--	66.6
Nova Scotia	26.6	8.9	71.4
New Brunswick	24.8	7.6	72.7
Quebec	22.9	8.5	68.3
Ontario	25.7	9.4	70.0
Manitoba	30.2	10.0	71.6
Saskatchewan	29.5	8.4	73.8
Alberta	25.2	7.1	74.2
British Columbia	28.2	9.6	70.9
<b>Canada</b>	<b>25.5</b>	<b>8.8</b>	<b>70.4</b>

Source: Statistics Canada, Catalogue 71-220.



## SECTION 2: UNEMPLOYMENT

### General unemployment levels

Women have generally experienced higher levels of unemployment than men. For example, throughout the late 1970s, the unemployment rate of women was consistently around two percentage points above that for men. The unemployment rate of women also exceeded that of men in the years following the recession of the early 1980s. (Chart 2.1)

However, during the recessionary periods in both the early 1980s and 1990s, the unemployment rate of women has been similar to that for men, and in some cases has even fallen below the male rate. In fact, in 1991, 9.7% of female labour force participants were unemployed, about a percentage point less than the rate for comparable men. (Table 2.1)

The factors which have contributed to current trends in the unemployment rates of women and men appear to be the same ones that influenced shifts in the early 1980s. First, both recessionary periods

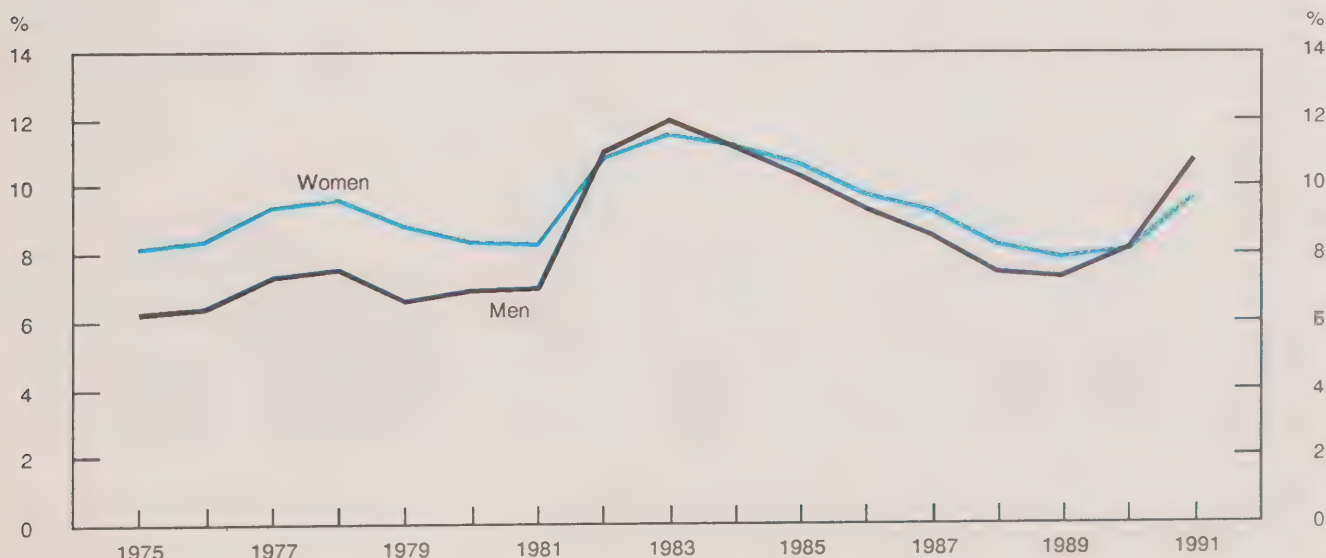
were characterized by much greater increases in unemployment in the male-dominated goods-producing industries than in the service sector. For example, the overall unemployment rate in the goods-producing sector jumped almost five percentage points between 1988 and 1991, compared with an increase of less than two points in the service sector. (Table 2.2)

Secondly, young adult males tend to be harder hit by recession than their female contemporaries. The unemployment rate of men aged 15-24 jumped from 12.9% in 1988 to 18.8% by 1991. For women in the same age group, the 1991 unemployment rate was 13.4%, up from a pre-recession low of 10.1% in 1989. (Table 2.3)

As with men, though, women aged 15-24 are more likely to be unemployed than women in any other age group. In 1991, 13.4% of female labour force participants in this age range were unemployed, compared with 9.3% of women aged 25-44 and 7.9% of those aged 45-64. (Chart 2.2)

Chart 2.1

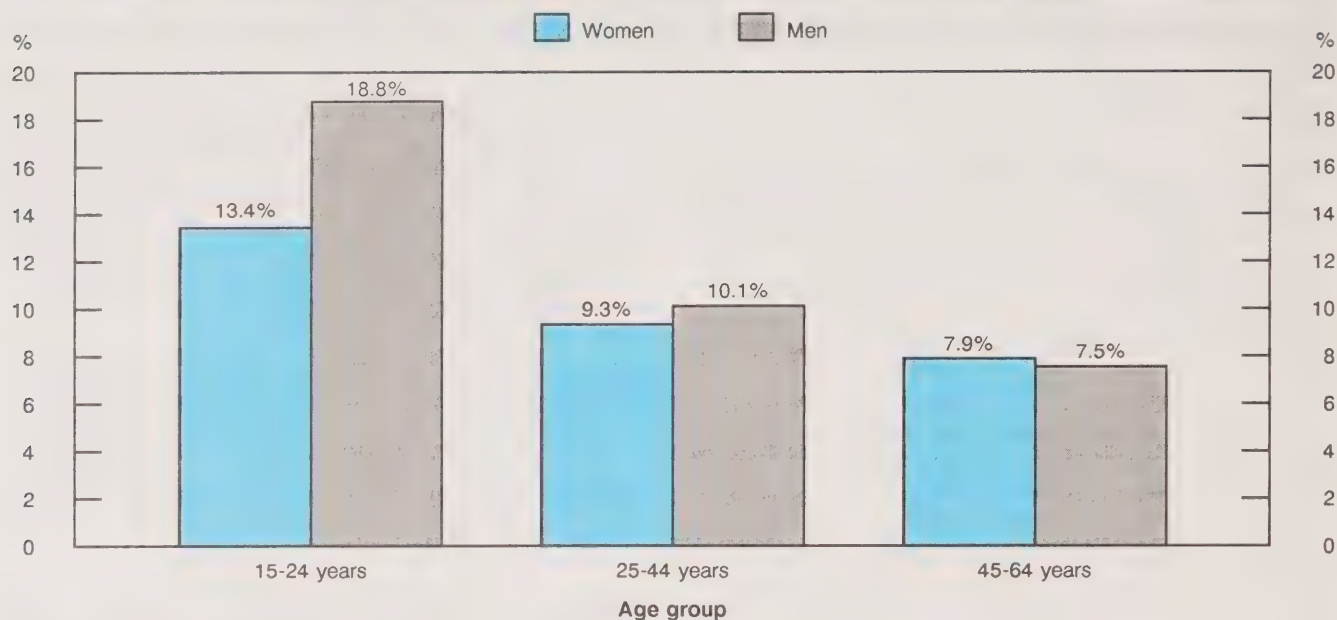
### Unemployment rates of women and men, 1975-1991



Source: Statistics Canada, Catalogues 71-001, 71-220 and 71-529.

Chart 2.2

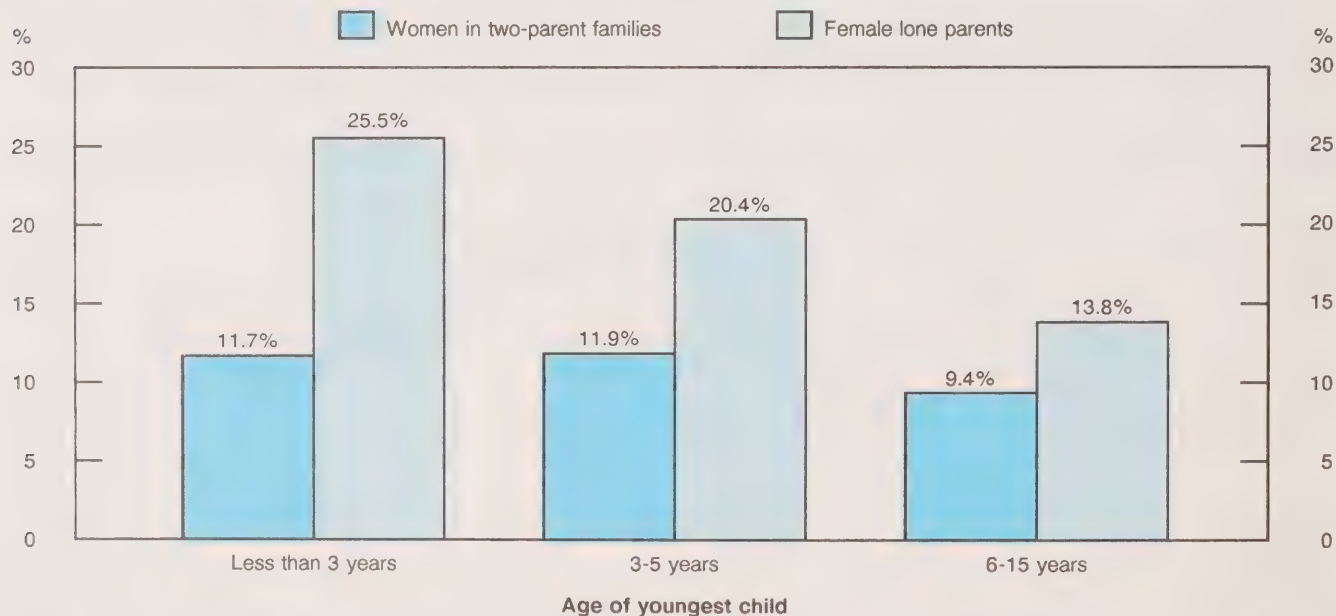
Unemployment rates of women and men, by age, 1991



Source: Statistics Canada, Catalogue 71-220.

Chart 2.3

Unemployment rates of women with children, by age of youngest child, 1991



Source: Statistics Canada, Catalogue 71-220.



## Marital status

Unemployment patterns of women also vary according to their marital status. In 1991, female unemployment rates ranged from 8.8% for married women to 11.8% for those who were separated or divorced. (Table 2.4)

While married women had the lowest unemployment rate, they were also the only group of women to experience higher levels of unemployment than men of the same marital status. In 1991, 7.8% of married men, a full percentage point below the figure for comparable women (8.8%), were unemployed.

In contrast, the unemployment rate of never-married women was six percentage points lower than the male rate in 1991 (11.2% versus 17.2%), while rates for both widowed and separated/divorced women were two points below those of men with the same marital status.

## Unemployment of mothers

Unemployment also tends to be relatively high among women with children. In 1991, 9.6% of women in two-parent families with children and 16.8% of female lone parents were unemployed. (Table 2.5) These figures compared with 7.9% for married women with no children less than age 16 and 11.2% for single women<sup>7</sup>.

Unemployment rates of women with children are also higher than those of comparable fathers. In 1991, 7.7% of men in two-parent families with children and 15.7% of male lone parents were unemployed.

Women are particularly likely to be unemployed if they have pre-school-aged children. The unemployment rate of women whose youngest child was under age 6 was 11.8% in 1991, compared with 9.4% for those whose youngest was aged 6-15. (Table 2.6)

Female lone parents with young children have especially high unemployment rates. In 1991, 25.5% of these women with children less than age 3 and 20.4% of those whose youngest child was aged 3-5 were unemployed. In comparison, the unemployment rate of female lone parents with school-aged children was 13.8%. (Chart 2.3)

## Reasons for unemployment

The majority of unemployed women have either lost their last job or been laid off. In 1991, 56% of unemployed women fell into one of these categories. This figure, though, was well below that for

unemployed men, 74% of whom had either lost their last job or been laid off. (Table 2.7)

At the same time, women are more likely than men to be unemployed because of personal/family responsibilities (7% versus 1%), illness (5% versus 3%), or because they were either new job market entrants who had never worked or labour force re-entrants who had not worked in the preceding five years (8% versus 4%).

## Duration of unemployment

Women are generally unemployed for shorter periods of time than men. On average, unemployed women were out of work for 18.6 weeks in 1991, compared with 19.9 weeks for men. (Table 2.8)

As well, women are somewhat less likely than men to experience extended periods of unemployment. In 1991, 6.5% of women, compared with 7.8% of men, had been unemployed for more than one year.

For both women and men, the duration of unemployment increases with age. Nonetheless, at all ages, the average length of unemployment of women is still lower than that of men.

## Provincial unemployment

Female unemployment rates are highest in Atlantic Canada and Quebec. For example, in 1991, 17.7% of female labour force participants in Newfoundland were unemployed, along with 16.2% of those in Prince Edward Island, 12.1% in New Brunswick, 12.0% in Nova Scotia, and 11.3% in Quebec. In the remaining provinces, the unemployment rate of women ranged from 9.3% in British Columbia to 7.1% in Saskatchewan. (Chart 2.4)

Women, though, experienced lower rates of unemployment than men in all provinces in 1991, with the exception of Nova Scotia, where unemployment rates of both women and men were about the same. (Table 2.9)

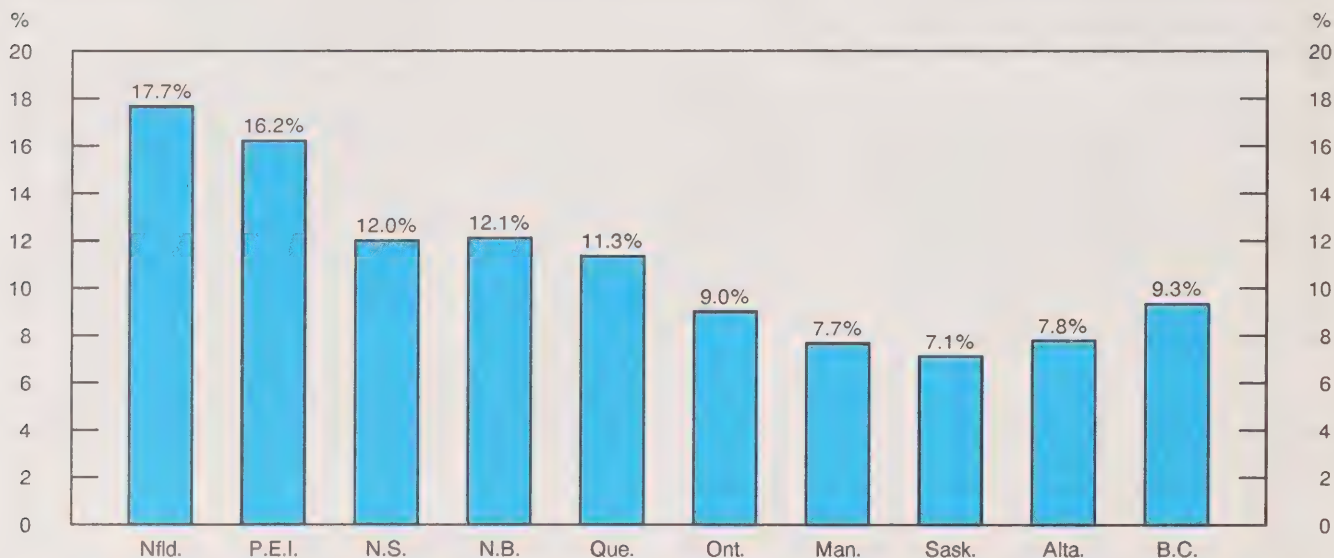
Unemployment figures are highest among young women in all provinces. Indeed, almost one quarter (24.2%) of Newfoundland's female labour force aged 15-24 was unemployed in 1991, although this was still well below the figure for their male contemporaries (32.0%). In other regions of Canada, unemployment rates among women aged 15-24 ranged from 11.0% in Alberta to almost 18% in both Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. Again, these figures were all lower than those for men in the same age range.

<sup>7</sup> Source: Statistics Canada, Catalogue 71-220.

At the same time, women aged 25-44 are less likely than comparable men to be unemployed in most provinces. There was a difference of two percentage points between the unemployment rates of women (6.9%) and men (9.1%) aged 25-44 in Manitoba in 1991, while the gap was around one

percentage point in Ontario, Quebec, British Columbia, and New Brunswick. In the remaining provinces, there was no significant difference between unemployment rates of women and men in this age range.

Chart 2.4

**Unemployment rates of women, by province, 1991**

Source: Statistics Canada, Catalogue 71-220.



**Table 2.1**  
**Unemployment of women and men, 1975-1991**

	Women		Men	
	Total unemployed	Unemployment rate	Total unemployed	Unemployment rate
	000s	%	000s	%
1975	299	8.1	391	6.2
1976	322	8.4	404	6.3
1977	377	9.4	473	7.3
1978	408	9.6	500	7.5
1979	387	8.8	449	6.6
1980	389	8.4	476	6.9
1981	403	8.3	494	7.0
1982	534	10.9	773	11.0
1983	585	11.6	849	12.0
1984	592	11.3	792	11.2
1985	572	10.7	739	10.3
1986	539	9.8	677	9.3
1987	527	9.3	623	8.5
1988	485	8.3	546	7.4
1989	470	7.9	548	7.3
1990	496	8.1	613	8.1
1991	599	9.7	817	10.8

Source: Statistics Canada, Catalogues 71-001, 71-220 and 71-529.

**Table 2.2**  
**Unemployment rates of women and men, by industry, 1981-1991**

	Service			Goods-producing		
	Women	Men	Total	Women	Men	Total
	%					
1981	6.8	5.6	6.2	9.7	8.0	8.4
1982	9.0	8.2	8.6	14.1	13.8	13.9
1983	9.8	9.3	9.5	13.4	14.7	14.4
1984	9.7	9.0	9.3	12.6	13.0	12.9
1985	9.0	8.5	8.8	12.2	11.6	11.3
1986	8.4	7.7	8.1	10.7	10.6	10.6
1987	7.9	7.0	7.5	10.7	9.5	9.8
1988	7.1	6.0	6.6	9.7	8.3	8.7
1989	6.8	6.0	6.4	9.1	8.3	8.5
1990	6.9	6.2	6.6	10.5	10.0	10.1
1991	8.2	8.3	8.2	13.0	13.6	13.5

Source: Statistics Canada, Catalogues 71-001, 71-220 and 71-529.

Table 2.3

## Unemployment rates of women and men, by age, 1975-1991

	People aged							
	15-24		25-44		45-64		Total <sup>1</sup>	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
	%							
1975	11.4	12.5	7.1	4.4	5.4	3.9	8.1	6.2
1976	12.1	13.2	7.6	4.6	5.2	3.7	8.4	6.3
1977	13.8	14.9	8.2	5.2	6.1	4.5	9.4	7.3
1978	13.8	15.0	8.7	5.5	6.1	4.9	9.6	7.5
1979	12.7	13.2	7.8	4.9	5.6	4.2	8.8	6.6
1980	12.6	13.7	7.0	5.2	5.8	4.2	8.4	6.9
1981	12.3	14.1	7.5	5.3	5.1	4.3	8.3	7.0
1982	16.1	21.1	9.7	9.1	7.1	6.9	10.9	11.0
1983	17.0	22.3	10.5	10.3	7.9	7.7	11.6	12.0
1984	16.1	19.3	10.5	9.9	8.1	7.7	11.3	11.2
1985	14.5	18.1	10.2	9.0	7.7	7.4	10.7	10.3
1986	13.6	16.4	9.2	8.3	7.3	6.5	9.8	9.3
1987	12.4	14.8	8.7	7.5	7.5	6.1	9.3	8.5
1988	11.0	12.9	8.0	6.5	6.6	5.4	8.3	7.4
1989	10.1	12.4	7.9	6.6	5.9	5.4	7.9	7.3
1990	11.4	14.0	7.8	7.5	6.1	5.8	8.1	8.1
1991	13.4	18.8	9.3	10.1	7.9	7.5	9.7	10.8

<sup>1</sup> Includes those aged 65 and over.

Source: Statistics Canada, Catalogues 71-001, 71-220 and 71-529.

Table 2.4

## Unemployment rates of women and men, by marital status, 1981-1991

	Single		Married		Separated/ divorced		Widowed		Total	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
	%									
1981	10.1	13.3	7.6	4.4	8.3	9.3	5.3	--	8.3	7.0
1982	13.2	19.6	9.8	7.6	12.2	13.4	7.4	9.6	10.9	11.0
1983	13.6	20.9	10.5	8.3	13.6	17.2	8.9	10.1	11.6	12.0
1984	13.0	18.9	10.5	7.7	13.3	14.9	8.8	9.8	11.3	11.2
1985	11.7	17.5	10.0	7.0	13.2	15.4	8.6	9.7	10.7	10.3
1986	11.3	15.8	9.0	6.4	11.6	13.0	8.4	7.3	9.8	9.3
1987	9.9	14.0	8.7	5.9	10.9	11.7	11.1	7.4	9.3	8.5
1988	8.7	12.1	8.0	5.1	9.7	10.7	7.3	--	8.3	7.4
1989	8.5	12.1	7.4	5.0	9.7	10.0	6.4	8.8	7.9	7.3
1990	9.1	13.2	7.5	5.7	10.1	11.2	7.1	8.9	8.1	8.1
1991	11.2	17.2	8.8	7.8	11.8	13.8	9.0	11.2	9.7	10.8

Source: Statistics Canada, Catalogues 71-001, 71-220 and 71-529.

Table 2.5

## Unemployment rates of parents, by family status, 1981-1991

	Female lone parents	Male lone parents	Women in two-parent families	Men in two-parent families
	%			
1981	11.9	7.5	8.8	4.2
1982	16.6	12.9	10.9	7.6
1983	18.8	12.2	11.7	8.2
1984	18.1	15.5	11.8	7.6
1985	18.4	11.7	11.1	6.9
1986	18.4	11.2	9.9	6.2
1987	17.2	8.8	9.6	5.9
1988	14.7	10.8	8.9	4.7
1989	14.3	11.5	8.3	4.8
1990	15.2	12.6	8.4	5.5
1991	16.8	15.7	9.6	7.7

Source: Statistics Canada, Catalogues 71-001, 71-220 and 71-529, and the Labour Force Survey.

Table 2.6

## Unemployment rates of women with children, by age of youngest child, 1981-1991

	Youngest child less than 3 years	Youngest child 3-5 years	Youngest child less than 6 years	Youngest child 6-15 years	Total with children less than 16 years
	%				
1981	12.0	10.6	11.4	7.5	9.1
1982	14.1	13.0	13.6	10.1	11.6
1983	14.7	14.1	14.5	11.1	12.6
1984	15.1	13.9	14.6	10.9	12.5
1985	14.1	12.9	13.6	10.8	12.0
1986	12.7	12.1	12.5	9.8	11.0
1987	12.3	11.2	11.8	9.5	10.5
1988	11.3	10.5	11.0	8.4	9.6
1989	11.7	9.6	10.8	7.7	9.1
1990	11.3	10.2	10.8	8.1	9.3
1991	11.7	11.9	11.8	9.4	10.5

Source: Statistics Canada, Catalogues 71-001, 71-220 and 71-529.

Table 2.7

## Unemployed women and men, by reason for leaving last job, 1991

	Women		Men	
	000s	%	000s	%
Own illness	30	5.0	24	2.9
Personal/family responsibility	43	7.2	10	1.2
Going to school	32	5.3	45	5.5
Lost job/ laid off	335	55.9	601	73.6
Retired	4	0.7	8	1.0
Other reasons	107	17.9	96	11.8
Had not worked in last 5 years	26	4.3	12	1.4
Never worked	23	3.8	21	2.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>599</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>817</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Statistics Canada, Catalogue 71-220.



**Table 2.8**  
**Duration of periods of unemployment, by age, 1991**

	Women aged				Men aged			
	15-24	25-44	45 and over	Total	15-24	25-44	45 and over	Total
	%							
4 weeks or less	35.8	25.6	22.4	27.7	32.5	23.0	19.6	25.2
5-13 weeks	32.1	27.2	24.1	27.9	31.3	26.9	24.1	27.5
14-26 weeks	17.6	21.6	20.7	20.4	20.3	22.5	22.2	21.7
27-52 weeks	10.1	17.0	19.8	15.7	11.4	18.4	19.0	16.4
53 weeks and over	3.1	6.4	10.3	6.5	3.7	8.0	13.3	7.8
Other	--	2.2	--	2.2	--	1.4	--	1.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Average duration (weeks)	13.6	19.4	23.4	18.6	14.6	20.8	25.8	19.9
<b>Total unemployed (000s)</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>324</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>599</b>	<b>246</b>	<b>413</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>817</b>

Source: Statistics Canada, Catalogue 71-220.

**Table 2.9**  
**Unemployment rates of women and men, by age and province, 1991**

	People aged							
	15-24		25-44		45-64		Total <sup>1</sup>	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
	%							
Newfoundland	24.2	32.0	16.9	17.1	--	12.9	17.7	18.9
Prince Edward Island	--	--	--	--	--	--	16.2	17.4
Nova Scotia	17.8	21.6	11.2	11.4	--	6.9	12.0	12.0
New Brunswick	17.9	22.6	11.6	12.2	--	8.8	12.1	13.2
Quebec	14.9	21.4	10.8	11.6	9.7	9.5	11.3	12.5
Ontario	12.3	18.3	8.5	9.5	7.5	6.7	9.0	10.1
Manitoba	11.8	17.4	6.9	9.1	--	6.3	7.7	9.7
Saskatchewan	11.5	16.1	6.5	6.7	--	--	7.1	7.6
Alberta	11.0	13.3	7.7	7.9	5.5	6.6	7.8	8.5
British Columbia	12.7	17.7	8.9	9.9	7.7	7.1	9.3	10.3

<sup>1</sup> Includes those aged 65 and over.

Source: Statistics Canada, Catalogue 71-220.

## SECTION 3: EARNINGS AND INCOME

### Average earnings<sup>8</sup>

Employed women in Canada earn substantially less than their male counterparts. In 1991, women working on a full-time, full-year basis earned an average of \$26,800, about 70% as much as comparable men. (Table 3.1)

As well, there has been little change in the female-to-male earnings ratio over the last decade. The 1991 figure was only six percentage points higher than that for 1981, when women's earnings were 64% those of men. (Chart 3.1)

### Earnings gap smallest for young women

The disparity between female and male earnings exists in all age groups. In 1991, the earnings of women as a percentage of those of men ranged from 63% for women aged 55-64 to 85% for those aged 20-24. The fact that the average earnings of young women and men are the most comparable, though, reflects to a certain extent the relatively low earnings of both groups in this age range. (Table 3.2)

It is also interesting to note that women in the 35-44 age group had the highest average earnings (\$29,400) of any group of women in 1991, whereas male employment income was greatest for men aged 45-54 (\$44,100). Consequently, the ratio of women's earnings to those of men was slightly higher in the 35-44 age range (69%) than for those aged 45-54 (66%).

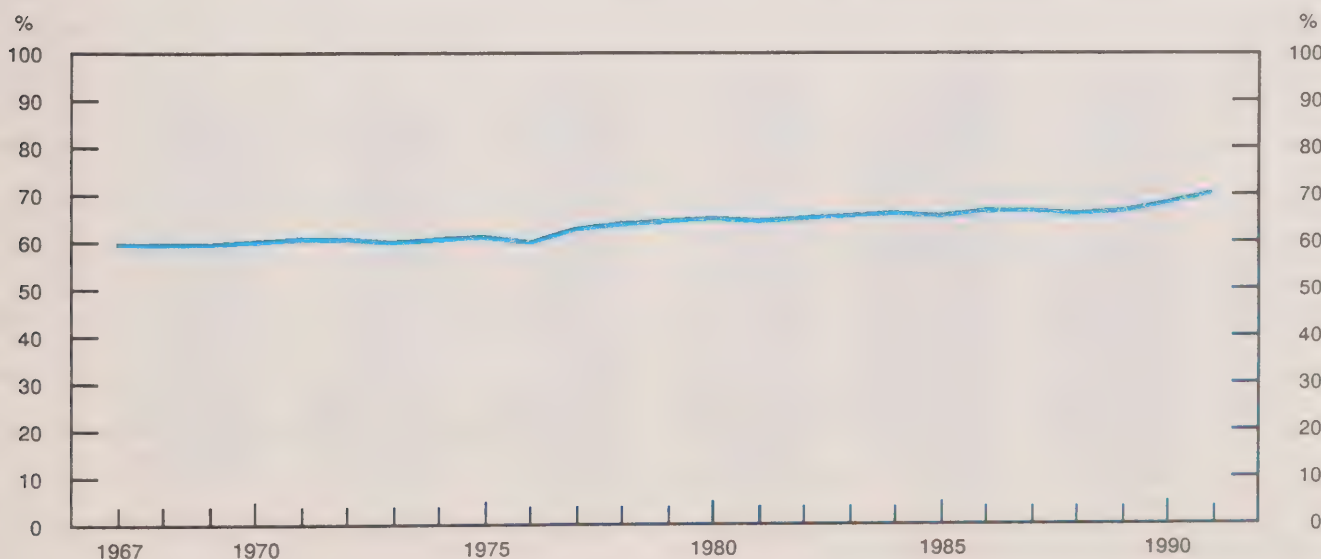
### Marital status

There is little variation in the earnings of women in different marital classifications. Indeed, in 1991, there was about a \$600 difference between the employment income of married and single women employed on a full-time, full-year basis. At the same time, women who were separated/divorced or widowed made about \$3,000 a year more than their married or single counterparts. (Chart 3.2)

<sup>8</sup> Unless stated otherwise, the figures in this section are for women and men employed on a full-time, full-year basis.

Chart 3.1

Earnings of women as a percentage of those of men<sup>1</sup>, 1967-1991



<sup>1</sup> Includes earnings of full-time, full-year workers.

Source: Statistics Canada, Catalogue 13-217.

Chart 3.2

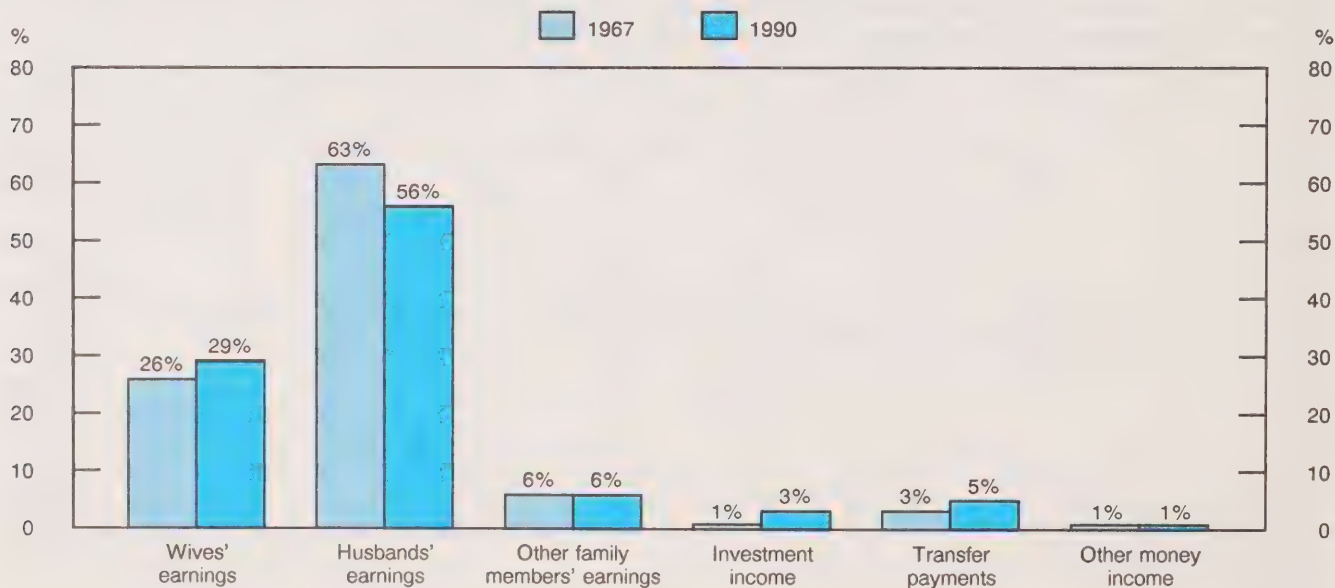
Earnings of women and men<sup>1</sup>, by marital status, 1991

<sup>1</sup> Includes earnings of full-time, full-year workers.

Source: Statistics Canada, Catalogue 13-217.

Chart 3.3

## Composition of income of dual-earner families, 1967 and 1990



Source: Statistics Canada, Catalogue 13-215.



There is, however, considerable difference between the earnings of women and men in most marital categories. For example, in 1991, married women earned only 65% as much as married men, while the figure for separated/divorced or widowed women was 77%. The exception is single women, whose earnings were 91% those of comparable men, although this was primarily a reflection of the fact that the earnings of single men were relatively low.

While the earnings of married women remain below those of men in husband-wife (including common-law) families, women are making an increasingly important contribution to family income. The earnings of wives made up 29% of family income in 1990 compared with 26% in 1967. At the same time, husbands' contribution to family income fell from 63% in 1967 to 56% in 1990. The relative shares of income received from investments and transfer payments also increased over the same period. (Chart 3.3)

Overall, the average income of dual-earner families was \$62,800 in 1990, up 60% from 1967. In comparison, single-earner families had an average income of \$47,800 in 1990, representing an increase of 43% over 1967<sup>9</sup>.

## Education

Women have considerably lower earnings than men whatever their educational qualifications, although the

gap closes the higher the level of formal education. Nonetheless, in 1991, women with a university degree still earned less than three quarters (72%) of the employment income of comparable men. (Chart 3.4)

At the same time, women with either a high school diploma or post-secondary training at a non-university institution earned 69% as much as their male counterparts, while women with some secondary schooling made just 64% as much as men with similar educational attainment. The figure for women with less than a Grade 9 education was 67%, reflecting, at least in part, the fact that both women and men in this education grouping have very low incomes. (Table 3.3)

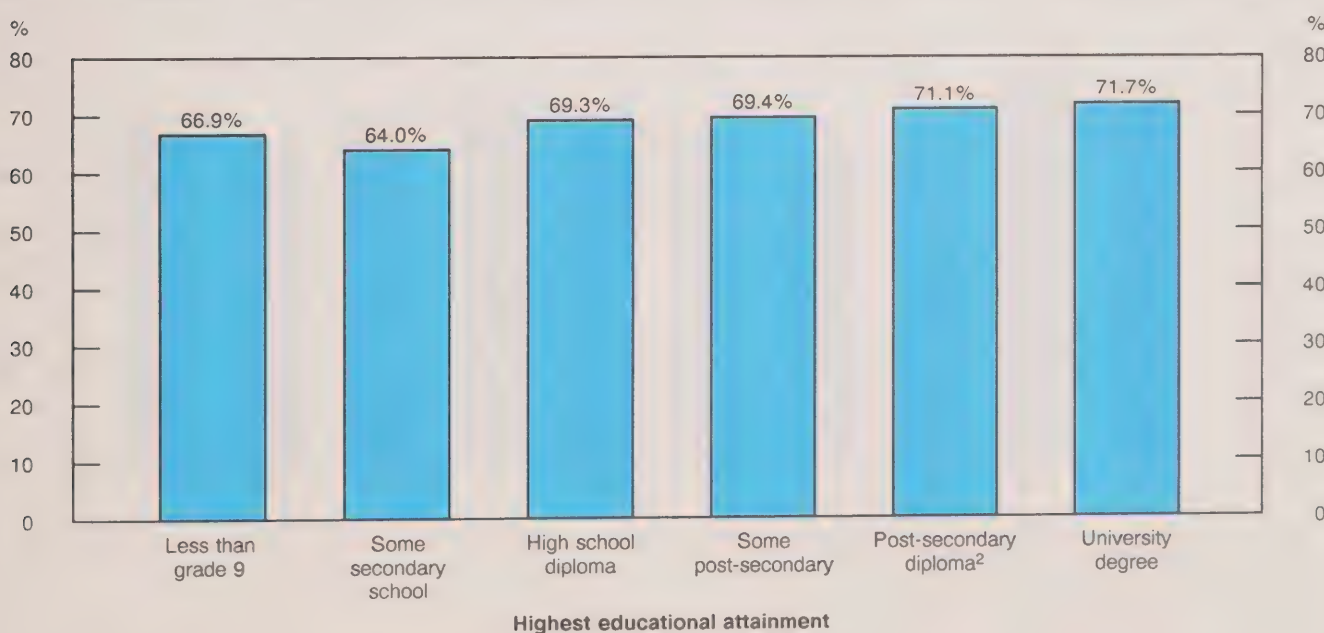
## Occupation

The earnings of women are quite high compared to those of men in several professional groups. In 1991, women employed in artistic and recreational professions made 85% as much as their male colleagues, while the figures were 78% in teaching, and 81% in the natural sciences. (Chart 3.5)

<sup>9</sup> Source: Statistics Canada, Catalogue 13-215.

Chart 3.4

### Earnings of women as a percentage of those of men<sup>1</sup>, by education, 1991



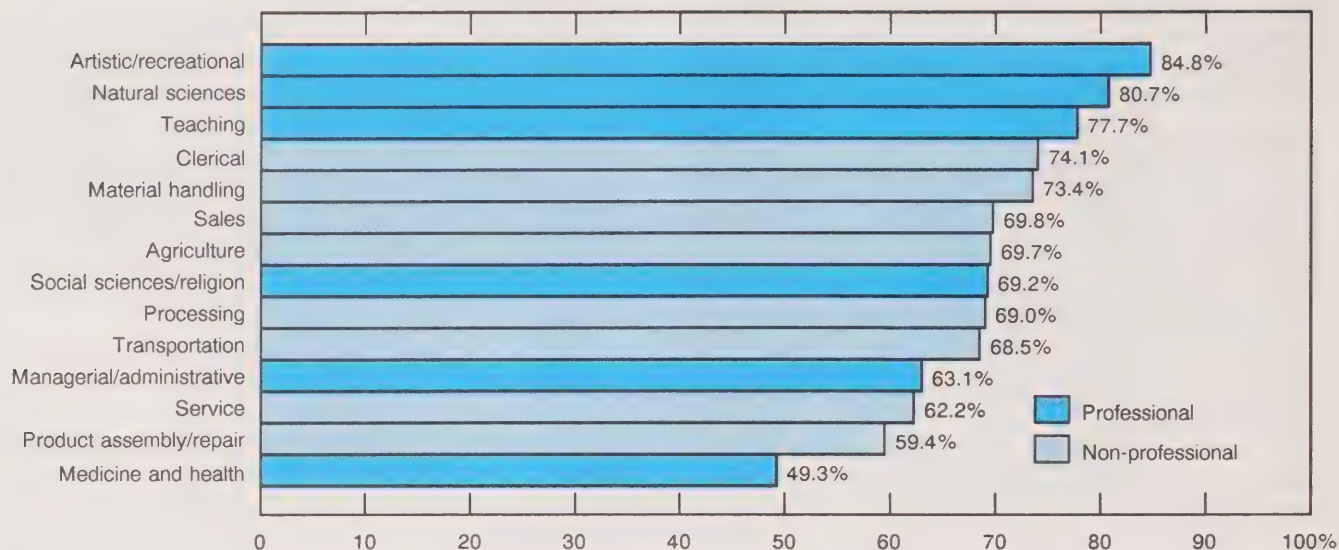
<sup>1</sup> Includes earnings of full-time, full-year workers.

<sup>2</sup> Includes trades certificate.

Source: Statistics Canada, Catalogue 13-217.

Chart 3.5

Earnings of women as a percentage of those of men<sup>1</sup>, by occupation, 1991

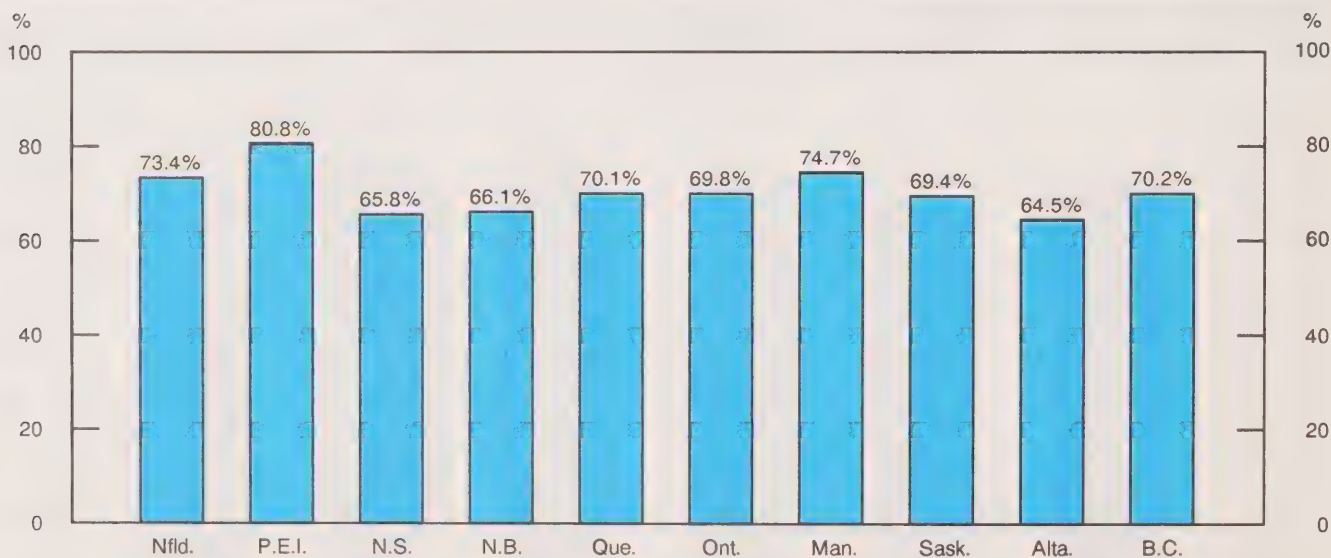


<sup>1</sup> Includes earnings of full-time, full-year workers.

Source: Statistics Canada, Catalogue 13-217.

Chart 3.6

Earnings of women as a percentage of those of men<sup>1</sup>, by province, 1991



<sup>1</sup> Includes earnings of full-time, full year workers.

Source: Statistics Canada, Catalogue 13-217.

On the other hand, the female-to-male earnings ratio was quite low for managers/administrators (63%). It was also very low, just 49% in 1991, for medical and health professionals. This reflects in part, however, that women employed in these fields tend to be concentrated in the lower-paying occupations such as nursing, whereas men are more likely to be diagnosis and treatment professionals such as doctors and dentists.

For women employed in non-professional occupations, the earnings ratio was above the national rate (70%) for clerical workers (74%), as well as for those involved in material handling (73%). In contrast, women's earnings were just 62% those of men for those involved in service, while the figure was less than 60% in manufacturing.

### Provincial earnings

There is considerable variation in women's earnings across the country. In 1991, women in Ontario had the highest average annual earnings, at about \$29,000 per female employee. This was followed by

British Columbia at just over \$27,000. (Table 3.5) Indeed, these were the only two provinces in which women's earnings exceeded the national average of \$26,800. This is not surprising, though, given that British Columbia and Ontario also have the highest overall earnings for all workers.

At the same time, women's earnings were close to the national figure in Quebec (\$25,700) and Alberta (\$25,300). In the remaining provinces, women's earnings ranged from \$22,100 in Saskatchewan to \$24,700 in Prince Edward Island.

There is also considerable provincial variation in the ratio of women's earnings to those of men. This figure was well above the national average of 70% in Prince Edward Island (81%), Newfoundland (73%), and Manitoba (75%). To a large degree, though, this reflects the fact that men's incomes in these provinces were also relatively low. In the remaining provinces, women's earnings ranged from 65% those of men in Alberta to around 70% in British Columbia, Quebec, and Ontario. (Chart 3.6).



**Table 3.1**  
**Average earnings<sup>1</sup> of women and men, 1967-1991**

	Full-time full-year workers			Other workers			All earners		
	Women	Men	Earnings ratio <sup>2</sup>	Women	Men	Earnings ratio <sup>2</sup>	Women	Men	Earnings ratio <sup>2</sup>
	\$	\$	%	\$	\$	%	\$	\$	%
1967	17,154	29,368	58.4	6,162	12,187	50.6	11,235	24,369	46.1
1969	18,793	32,035	58.7	7,320	15,923	46.0	11,895	26,029	45.7
1971	20,717	34,727	59.7	6,914	13,712	50.4	13,095	27,940	46.9
1972	21,508	35,953	59.8	7,100	13,738	51.7	13,357	28,967	46.1
1973	21,709	36,629	59.3	7,256	13,898	52.2	13,645	29,495	46.3
1974	22,685	38,085	59.6	7,931	14,862	53.4	14,308	30,176	47.4
1975	23,511	39,059	60.2	7,852	15,513	50.6	14,853	30,892	48.1
1976	24,730	41,818	59.1	8,631	16,458	52.4	15,368	32,915	46.7
1977	24,093	38,827	62.1	8,776	14,441	60.8	15,854	31,230	50.8
1978	24,886	39,505	63.0	8,371	14,268	58.7	15,799	31,098	50.8
1979	24,328	38,329	63.5	8,703	15,018	57.9	15,965	30,960	51.6
1980	25,093	39,057	64.2	8,579	13,851	61.9	16,015	31,033	51.6
1981	24,422	38,318	63.7	8,913	14,244	62.6	16,187	30,270	53.5
1982	24,255	37,910	64.0	8,316	13,192	63.0	15,872	28,902	54.9
1983	25,029	38,752	64.6	7,856	12,578	62.5	15,996	29,124	54.9
1984	24,712	37,691	65.6	8,753	12,488	70.1	16,342	28,498	57.3
1985	24,579	37,847	64.9	8,489	11,976	70.9	16,391	29,175	56.2
1986	25,065	38,085	65.8	9,221	12,447	74.1	16,999	29,617	57.4
1987	25,406	38,529	65.9	9,427	12,282	76.8	17,195	29,832	57.6
1988	25,469	38,995	65.3	9,286	12,474	74.4	17,493	30,487	57.4
1989	25,553	38,813	65.8	9,684	13,097	73.9	18,030	30,574	59.0
1990	26,325	38,937	67.6	9,459	13,214	71.6	18,105	30,219	59.9
1991	26,842	38,567	69.6	8,890	12,539	70.9	18,050	29,328	61.5

<sup>1</sup> Expressed in constant 1991 dollars.

<sup>2</sup> Represents women's earnings as a percentage of those of men.

Source: Statistics Canada, Catalogue 13-217.

**Table 3.2**  
**Average earnings of women and men, by age, 1991**

Age group:	Full-time full-year workers			Other workers			All earners		
	Women	Men	Earnings ratio <sup>1</sup>	Women	Men	Earnings ratio <sup>1</sup>	Women	Men	Earnings ratio <sup>1</sup>
	\$	\$	%	\$	\$	%	\$	\$	%
15-19	--	14,882	--	3,673	3,951	93.0	4,180	4,571	91.4
20-24	19,663	23,274	84.5	7,454	9,387	79.4	11,920	14,165	84.2
25-34	25,616	33,619	76.2	10,614	15,070	70.4	19,138	27,633	69.3
35-44	29,376	42,394	69.3	10,672	17,531	60.9	22,057	37,417	58.9
45-54	29,030	44,068	65.9	10,742	18,918	56.8	22,112	39,728	55.7
55-64	25,440	40,319	63.1	10,114	17,295	58.4	17,838	33,164	53.8
65 and over	--	29,584	--	7,380	15,239	48.4	11,041	21,290	51.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>26,842</b>	<b>38,567</b>	<b>69.6</b>	<b>8,890</b>	<b>12,539</b>	<b>70.9</b>	<b>18,050</b>	<b>29,328</b>	<b>61.5</b>

<sup>1</sup> Represents women's earnings as a percentage of those of men.

Source: Statistics Canada, Catalogue 13-217

Table 3.3

## Average earnings of women and men, by education, 1991

	Full-time full-year workers			Other workers			All earners		
	Women	Men	Earnings ratio <sup>1</sup>	Women	Men	Earnings ratio <sup>1</sup>	Women	Men	Earnings ratio <sup>1</sup>
	\$	\$	%	\$	\$	%	\$	\$	%
Educational attainment:									
Less than grade 9	18,138	27,116	66.9	6,545	13,076	50.1	11,476	21,030	54.6
Some secondary school	20,709	32,348	64.0	6,050	9,193	65.8	11,060	20,652	53.6
High school diploma	23,265	33,583	69.3	9,034	13,288	68.0	17,013	27,179	62.6
Some post-secondary	24,891	35,845	69.4	7,706	10,354	74.4	14,826	23,595	62.8
Post-secondary certificate or diploma <sup>2</sup>	26,951	37,887	71.1	10,966	15,790	69.4	20,062	31,587	63.5
University degree	40,537	56,522	71.7	14,028	18,054	77.7	31,233	49,231	63.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>26,842</b>	<b>38,567</b>	<b>69.6</b>	<b>8,890</b>	<b>12,539</b>	<b>70.9</b>	<b>18,050</b>	<b>29,328</b>	<b>61.5</b>

<sup>1</sup> Represents women's earnings as a percentage of those of men.<sup>2</sup> Includes trades certificate.

Source: Statistics Canada, Catalogue 13-217.

Table 3.4

Average earnings of women and men, by occupation<sup>1</sup>, 1991

	Women	Men	Earnings ratio <sup>2</sup>
	\$	\$	%
Managerial/administrative	32,299	51,173	63.1
Natural sciences	37,544	46,535	80.7
Social sciences/religion	37,015	53,507	69.2
Teaching	39,723	51,115	77.7
Medicine/health	32,155	65,175	49.3
Artistic/recreational	28,006	33,017	84.8
Clerical	23,771	32,097	74.1
Sales	23,970	34,339	69.8
Service	18,146	29,152	62.2
Agriculture	12,558	18,010	69.7
Processing	23,499	34,076	69.0
Product assembly/fabrication/repair	20,666	34,763	59.4
Transport equipment operation	23,311	34,029	68.5
Material handling	22,134	30,153	73.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>26,842</b>	<b>38,567</b>	<b>69.6</b>

<sup>1</sup> Includes only full-time, full-year workers.<sup>2</sup> Represents women's earnings as a percentage of those of men.

Source: Statistics Canada, Catalogue 13-217.

**Table 3.5**  
**Average earnings of women and men, by province, 1991**

	Full-time full-year workers			Other workers			All earners		
	Women	Men	Earnings ratio <sup>1</sup>	Women	Men	Earnings ratio <sup>1</sup>	Women	Men	Earnings ratio <sup>1</sup>
	\$	\$	%	\$	\$	%	\$	\$	%
Newfoundland	24,520	33,398	73.4	6,184	9,293	66.5	12,538	19,927	62.9
Prince Edward Island	24,681	30,542	80.8	6,738	10,062	67.0	13,485	19,819	68.0
Nova Scotia	23,212	35,265	65.8	7,154	11,270	63.4	14,228	25,178	56.5
New Brunswick	22,982	34,749	66.1	6,906	9,369	73.7	14,165	23,356	60.6
Quebec	25,740	36,710	70.1	8,620	12,800	67.3	17,517	28,289	61.9
Ontario	28,969	41,519	69.8	9,487	12,692	74.7	19,972	31,813	62.8
Manitoba	23,847	31,929	74.7	8,470	10,046	84.3	15,515	23,762	65.3
Saskatchewan	22,149	31,898	69.4	7,615	10,028	75.9	14,493	24,429	59.3
Alberta	25,335	39,308	64.5	9,239	12,424	74.4	17,225	30,506	56.4
British Columbia	27,139	38,651	70.2	9,556	15,347	62.3	18,445	30,226	61.0
<b>Canada</b>	<b>26,842</b>	<b>38,567</b>	<b>69.6</b>	<b>8,890</b>	<b>12,539</b>	<b>70.9</b>	<b>18,050</b>	<b>29,328</b>	<b>61.5</b>

<sup>1</sup> Represents women's earnings as a percentage of those of men.

Source: Statistics Canada, Catalogue 13-217.



## SECTION 4: BENEFITS

### Maternity benefits

An important issue facing many working women in Canada is the availability of paid maternity leave<sup>10</sup>. In 1991, there were 164,000 maternity absences from work in Canada, almost double the number in 1980 (87,000). Overall, there were 3.9 maternity absences for every 100 employed women aged 15-44 in 1991, up from 2.7% in 1980. (Table 4.1)

The large majority of maternity absences are paid. In 1991, 89% of mothers on maternity leave received some form of monetary compensation. This was up considerably from 1980, when only about three quarters (77%) of maternity absences were compensated. However, the 1991 figure was also down slightly from 1986 and 1987 when the incidence of paid maternity absences had risen to 92%. (Chart 4.1)

Unemployment insurance benefits are the most common form of maternity leave compensation. In fact, in the majority of cases, it is the only type of payment received. In 1991, 77% of women on

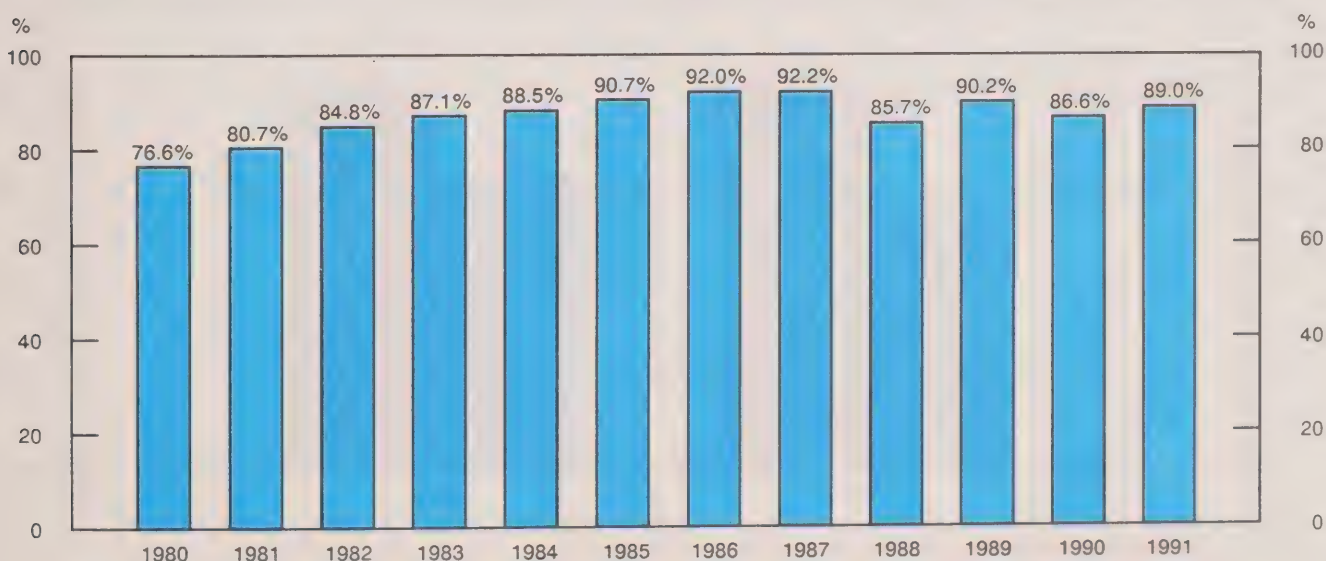
compensated maternity leave received only unemployment insurance benefits. Another 17% received unemployment insurance accompanied by other forms of compensation, such as group insurance benefits, while the remaining 6% received only benefits other than unemployment insurance. (Table 4.2)

There have, however, been some shifts in the percentages of women receiving benefits from these various sources. For instance, the share of women receiving unemployment insurance in combination with other sources has more than doubled since 1980, while fewer women are relying solely on either unemployment insurance or alternate forms of compensation.

<sup>10</sup> For more information about maternity leave, see "On Maternity Leave", by Joanne Moloney, in *Perspectives on Labour and Income, Statistics Canada, Catalogue 75-001, Preview Edition, 1989*; and "Maternity Leave", also by Joanne Moloney, in *Canadian Social Trends, Statistics Canada, Catalogue 11-008, Autumn 1989*.

Chart 4.1

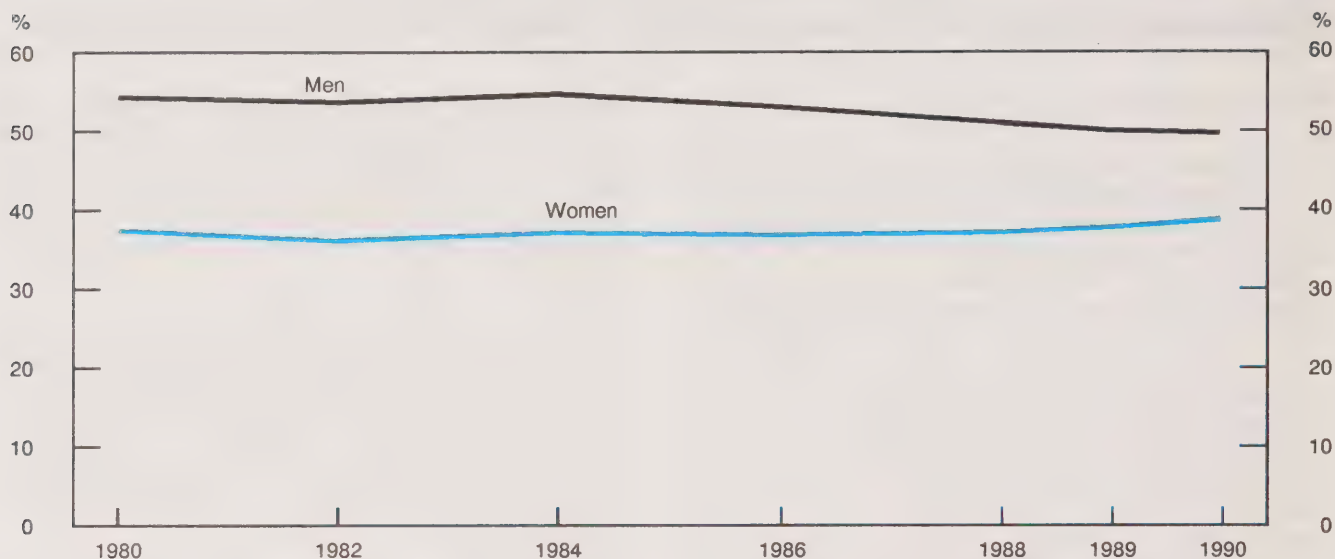
Percentage of ended maternity absences compensated, 1980-1991



Source: Statistics Canada, Absence from Work Survey.

Chart 4.2

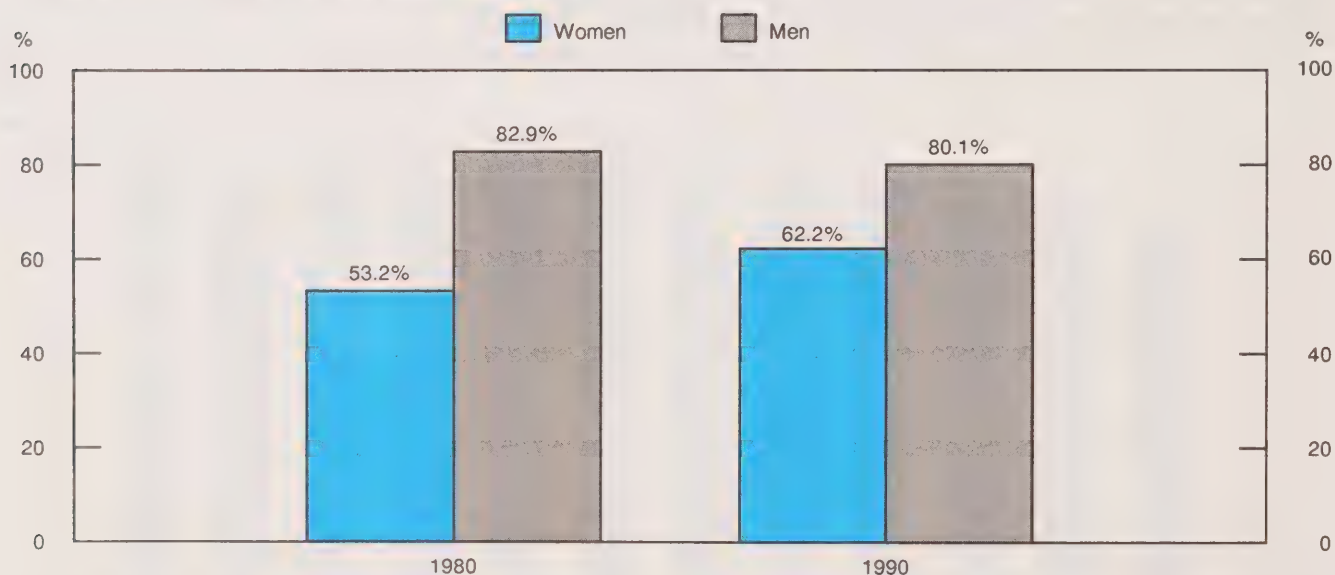
Percentage of employed women and men belonging to employer-sponsored pension plans, 1980-1990



Source: Statistics Canada, Catalogue 74-401.

Chart 4.3

Contributors to CPP and QPP as a percentage of those aged 15-64, 1980 and 1990



Source: Health and Welfare Canada and Régie des rentes du Québec.

## Employer-sponsored pension plans

Employed women are less likely than their male counterparts to be enrolled in employer-sponsored pension plans. In 1990, 39% of all paid female workers, compared with 50% of men, were members of such plans. (Table 4.3)

The share of women covered by employer-sponsored plans, however, rose slightly between 1980 and 1990, from 38% to 39%, whereas the percentage of male workers belonging to these plans dropped from 54% to 50% in the same period. (Chart 4.2)

Because of the tremendous growth in female involvement in the workplace, though, there has been a large increase in the actual number of women covered by employer-sponsored pension plans. Between 1980 and 1990, total female pension plan membership rose by 600,000, an increase of 44%. In the same period, male membership was up only 30,000, an increase of less than 1%. In fact, about 95% of the total increase in plan membership from 1980-1990 was accounted for by women. As a result, women represented 39% of all pension plan members in 1990, up from 31% in 1980.

## Government-sponsored pension plans

Because eligibility for the Canada Pension Plan and the Quebec Pension Plan is tied to employment, a

smaller proportion of women than men participate in these programs. In 1990, just 62% of women aged 15-64 were contributors to one of these plans, while the comparable figure for men was 80%. (Chart 4.3)

This difference, however, has diminished as women's employment has grown. Between 1980 and 1990, for example, the percentage of all women aged 15-64 contributing to these plans rose from 53% to 62%, whereas the proportion of male contributors dropped slightly from 83% to 80%.

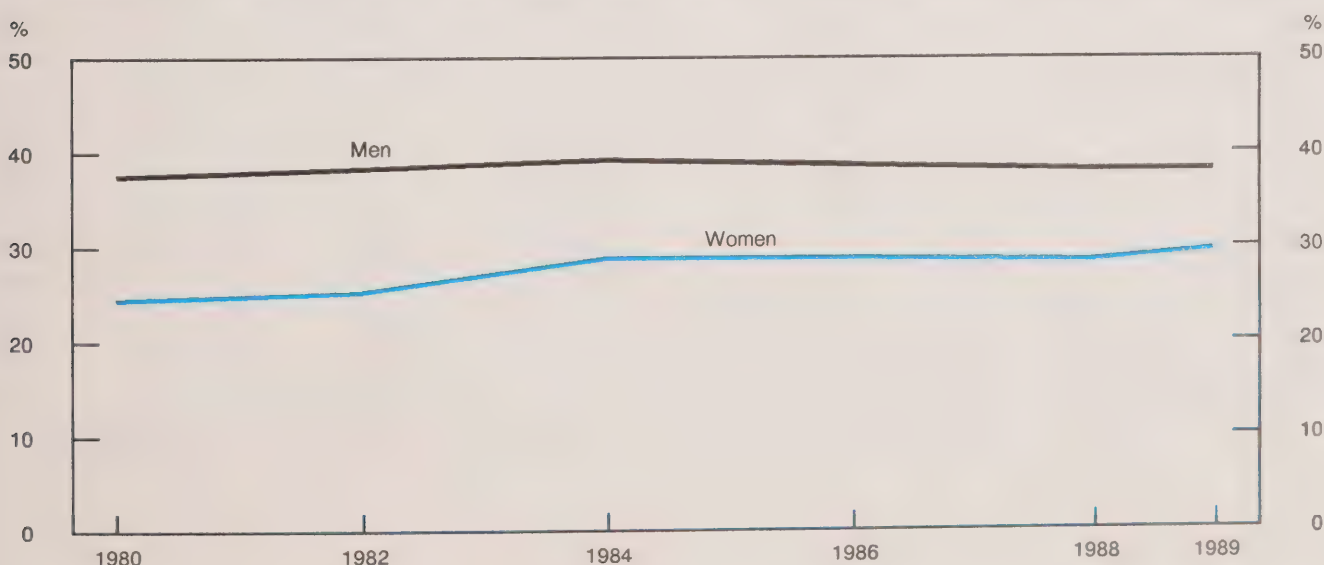
## Union membership

Working women are also less likely than their male counterparts to belong to a union. In 1989, 29% of all paid female workers, versus 38% of comparable men, were unionized. The percentage of women unionized, however, has increased five percentage points since 1980, when just 24% were union members, whereas the rate for men was up only one percentage point in the same period. (Chart 4.4)

That female workers tend to be less unionized than their male counterparts is explained, in part, by the fact that women are less likely to be employed in the more heavily unionized goods-producing industrial sector.

Chart 4.4

### Percentage of employed women and men unionized, 1980-1989



Source: Statistics Canada, Catalogues 71-001 and 71-202.



However, even those women employed in the major goods-producing industries have lower rates of unionization than their male colleagues. In 1989, for example, just 24% of women employed in manufacturing were union members, versus 41% of men. Similarly, only 13% of women working in primary industries other than agriculture and just 4% of those in construction trades were unionized, while the comparative figures for men were 38% and 61%. (Table 4.4)

Women also tend to be less unionized than their male colleagues in the female-dominated service sector. For instance, in public administration, 76% of paid female workers, versus 81% of males, belonged to a union. Similarly, in transportation, communication, and other utilities, the unionization rate of women (48%) was lower than that of men (55%). Women were also less likely than men to be unionized in trade industries: 10% compared to 13%. On the other hand, in the service industries, the female unionization rate, at 36%, was higher than the male rate (32%).

Table 4.1

## Maternity absences from work, 1980-1991

	Total maternity absences	Maternity absences as a % of employed women aged 15-44	% of maternity absences compensated
1980	86,991	2.7	76.6
1981	110,108	3.2	80.7
1982	112,501	3.4	84.8
1983	116,319	3.4	87.1
1984	118,204	3.3	88.5
1985	141,901	3.9	90.7
1986	137,196	3.6	92.0
1987	152,650	3.9	92.2
1988	116,715	2.9	85.7
1989	163,841	3.9	90.2
1990	162,896	3.8	86.6
1991	163,759	3.9	89.0

Source: Statistics Canada, Absence from Work Survey.

Table 4.2

## Percentage of maternity absences compensated, by type of compensation, 1980-1991

	Unemployment insurance only	Unemployment insurance plus other	Total unemployment insurance <sup>1</sup>	Other only	Total
			%		
1980	81.3	6.7	88.0	12.0	100.0
1981	82.3	7.9	90.1	9.9	100.0
1982	76.2	11.3	87.5	12.4	100.0
1983	77.2	11.9	89.1	10.9	100.0
1984	80.4	13.6	94.0	6.0	100.0
1985	76.1	14.3	90.4	9.6	100.0
1986	78.4	12.6	91.0	8.9	100.0
1987	78.5	13.2	91.7	8.3	100.0
1988	76.7	14.2	91.0	9.0	100.0
1989	78.2	15.4	93.6	6.4	100.0
1990	78.6	15.0	93.7	6.3	100.0
1991	76.9	17.0	93.9	6.1	100.0

<sup>1</sup> Includes maternity absences compensated solely by unemployment insurance, and those compensated by both unemployment insurance and an additional source.

Source: Statistics Canada, Absence from Work Survey.

**Table 4.3**  
**Membership in employer-sponsored pension plans, 1980-1990**

	Women			Men	
	Total members	% of employed paid workers	% of all plan members	Total members	% of employed paid workers
	(000s)			(000s)	
1980	1,378	37.6	30.8	3,098	54.2
1982	1,477	36.2	31.7	3,181	53.7
1984	1,525	37.3	33.4	3,039	54.7
1986	1,621	37.0	34.7	3,047	52.9
1988	1,763	37.2	36.4	3,082	51.0
1989	1,869	37.8	37.6	3,096	49.9
1990	1,981	39.0	38.8	3,128	49.6

Source: Statistics Canada, Catalogue 74-401.

**Table 4.4**  
**Percentage of paid workers unionized, by industry, 1980-1989**

	1980	1982	1984	1986	1988	1989
	%					
Agriculture						
Women	0.5	0.1	1.8	1.3	2.8	2.7
Men	0.4	0.2	0.8	1.1	1.3	1.6
Other primary industries						
Women	7.4	7.9	7.4	12.7	13.2	13.0
Men	38.2	37.1	33.7	36.9	36.4	38.3
Manufacturing						
Women	31.6	30.5	27.5	25.7	25.4	24.4
Men	47.3	49.6	43.6	43.3	41.3	41.3
Construction						
Women	3.9	4.2	3.7	3.7	3.7	4.4
Men	63.3	67.7	52.6	60.6	59.7	61.4
Transportation/communication/ other utilities						
Women	48.3	47.8	50.0	50.3	50.7	48.2
Men	54.6	55.3	58.5	58.8	58.8	55.4
Trade						
Women	7.2	7.7	7.3	7.9	8.4	10.2
Men	10.3	10.0	11.9	11.3	12.0	12.6
Finance						
Women	2.6	3.1	2.6	2.7	3.8	3.9
Men	2.4	2.9	2.9	3.0	2.7	3.5
Service industries						
Women	25.3	26.7	35.7	35.0	34.4	35.9
Men	22.6	24.7	38.9	34.5	31.6	32.4
Public administration						
Women	67.2	65.8	67.8	75.0	68.6	76.3
Men	68.1	69.8	75.3	77.2	82.0	81.2
<b>Total</b>						
<b>Women</b>	<b>23.9</b>	<b>24.8</b>	<b>28.4</b>	<b>28.4</b>	<b>28.3</b>	<b>29.4</b>
<b>Men</b>	<b>37.3</b>	<b>38.2</b>	<b>39.2</b>	<b>38.6</b>	<b>38.1</b>	<b>38.0</b>

Source: Statistics Canada, Catalogue 71-202.



## SECTION 5: CHILD CARE

### Children in care

As the number of women with children entering the workplace has grown, so has the need for child care services. According to the National Child Care Study<sup>11</sup>, 1.1 million pre-school-aged children and 1.6 million school-aged children required some form of child care in the fall of 1988 in order to accommodate the work or study schedules of their parents. (Table 5.1)

### Main method of child care

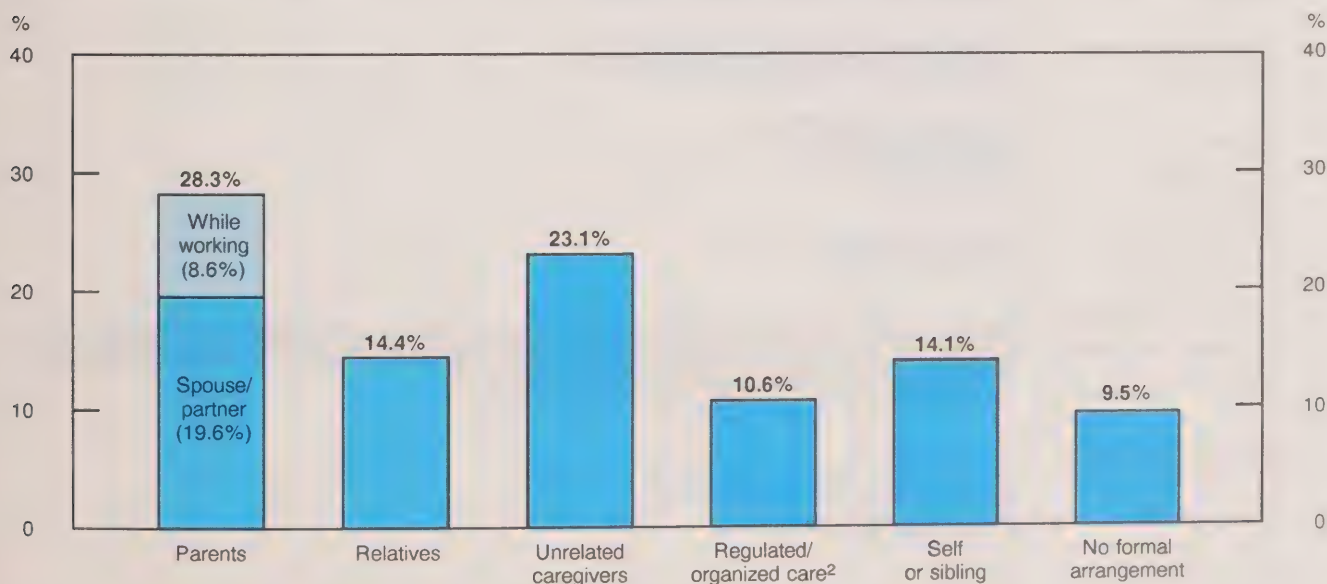
Organized or regulated care services, such as day care centres, nursery schools, before or after school care, and licensed family day care provide only a small portion of the main child care requirements of Canadian children. For the vast majority of children, informal arrangements are the major source of child care support.

In 1988, organized/regulated child care facilities functioned as the main method of care for only 11% of all children under age 13 whose parents worked or studied. Not surprisingly, organized care is used most frequently by families with pre-school-aged children. In 1988, nearly one quarter (24%) of children aged 3-5 and 12% of those less than 3 years old were cared for by these services. In contrast, the figure was just 5% for children aged 6-12. (Chart 5.1)

<sup>11</sup> For more information about this research project, see Lero, D.S., M. Shields, H. Goelman, A.R. Pence, and L.M. Brockman, *Canadian National Child Care Study: Introductory Report*, Statistics Canada, Catalogue 89-526.

Chart 5.1

### Main method of care used for children under age 13<sup>1</sup>, 1988



<sup>1</sup> Refers to main care arrangement used while the parent most responsible for child care worked or studied.

<sup>2</sup> Includes kindergarten/nursery schools, daycare centres, before/after school care and licensed family daycare.

Source: Lero, D.S., Goelman, H., Pence, A.R., and Brockman, L.M., *Canadian National Child Care Study*, unpublished data.

In 1988, parents themselves were the main source of care for 28% of all children aged 12 and under. In 9% of cases, the employed parent most responsible for child care (usually the mother) looked after the child while working, while one in five (20%) children were cared for by that parent's partner to cover work or study hours. In many cases, parents must off-shift their work hours to provide this care.

Nonetheless, the availability of child care outside of daytime, weekday hours is very important to many employed mothers, since women are especially likely to work non-standard work weeks. In 1988, 45% of employed parents primarily responsible for child care arrangements worked non-standard schedules, such as weekends, evenings, or irregular hours<sup>12</sup>.

Unrelated caregivers, such as friends, neighbours, or private babysitters, are also an important source of

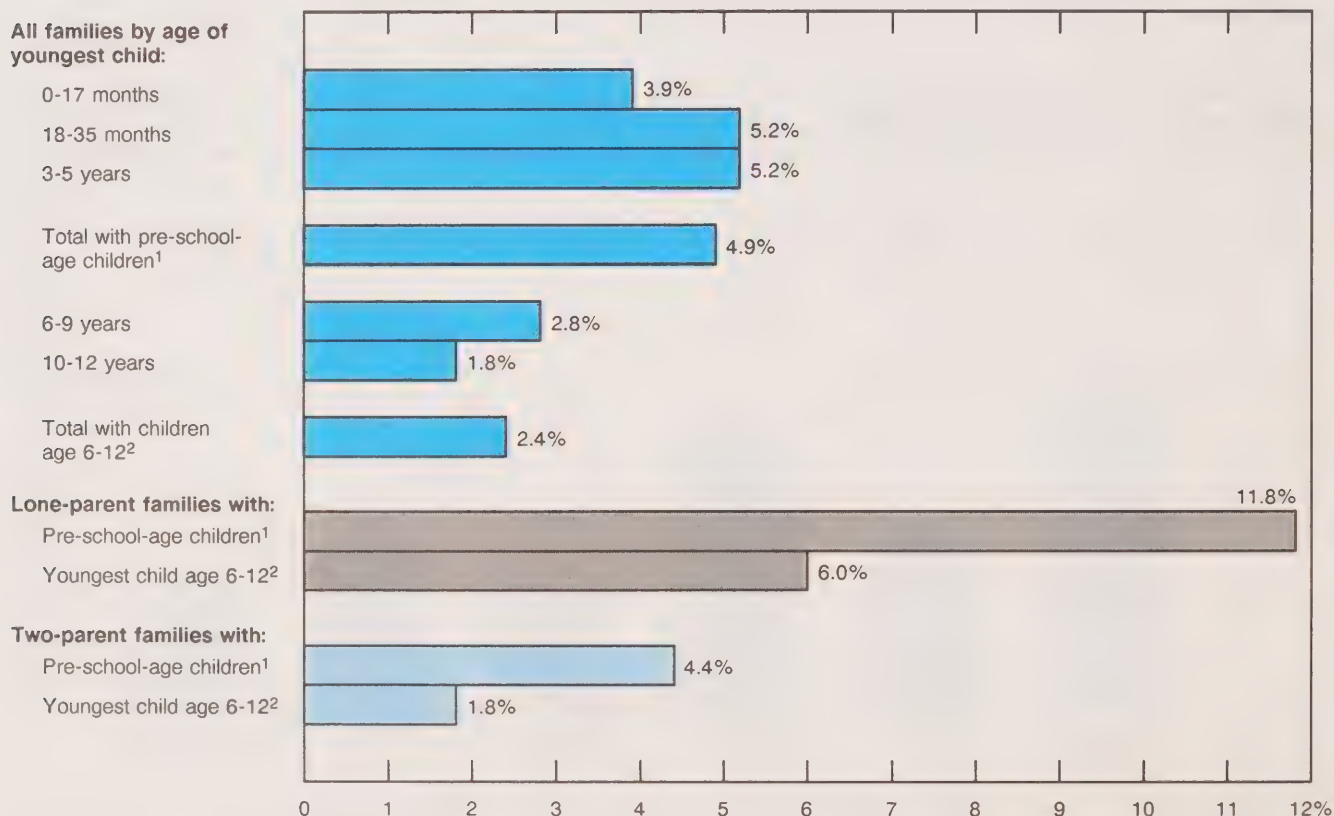
child care services. In 1988, 23% of children under age 13 were cared for in such an arrangement. Unrelated caregivers are especially important for those with pre-school-aged children. This type of informal arrangement was the main source of care for 37% of children under age 3 and 31% of those aged 3-5. In contrast, it was the main form of care for just 16% of children aged 6-12.

Relatives also play an important child care role for families with very young children. Reliance on a relative was the main child care arrangement for 24% of children under age 3 and 16% of those aged 3-5 years. In comparison, it was the main source of care for only 11% of children aged 6-12.

<sup>12</sup> **Source:** Lero, D.S., H. Goelman, A.R. Pence, L.M. Brockman, and S. Nuttall, *Parental Work Patterns and Child Care Needs*, Statistics Canada, Catalogue 89-529.

Chart 5.2

### Median percentage of family income spent on child care, 1987



<sup>1</sup> At least one child under age 6.

<sup>2</sup> All children age 6-12.

Source: Lero, D.S., Goelman H., Pence, A.R., and Brockman, L.M., *Canadian National Child Care Study*, unpublished data.

A large percentage of school-aged children in need of care (generally before or after school) are either responsible for their own care, are looked after by a sibling, or have no formal arrangement made for their care. Indeed, in 1988, 39% of all children aged 6-12 requiring care in order to accommodate parental work or study schedules fell into one of these categories: 23% were either looked after by a sibling or looked after themselves, while no formal child care arrangement outside of school were necessary for the remaining 16%<sup>13</sup>.

### Child care expenditures

Canadian families spent over \$2 billion on child care arrangements in 1987. Over three quarters (76%) of this total expenditure, almost \$1.6 billion, was used to support the child care needs of families with pre-school-aged children<sup>14</sup>.

In fact, families with pre-school-aged children spend twice as much on child care, as a percentage of family income, as families whose youngest child is aged 6-12. In 1987, families with children under age 6 allocated 4.9% of their total annual income to child care expenditures, versus 2.4% for those with school-aged children. (Chart 5.2) However, this difference is not surprising since most children over age 5 spend much of the day in school.

Whatever the age of their children, lone-parent families, the large majority of which are headed by women, spend nearly three times as much of their annual income on child care as do dual-parent families. For instance, these expenses accounted for 11.8% of the income of lone-parent families with pre-school-aged children in 1987, whereas the figure for comparable two-parent families was just 4.4%. Similarly, for families in which the youngest child was aged 6-12, child care costs represented 6.0% of lone-parent family income, versus 1.8% for comparable two-parent families.

This disparity is accounted for, in large part, by the very low incomes of lone-parent families. In fact, the median amount spent on child care by lone-parent families with pre-school-aged children in 1987 was \$1,680, less than the \$2,000 spent annually by comparable dual-parent households. For families whose youngest child was aged 6-12, the median annual child care expenditure for lone-parent families was \$1,060, just slightly higher than that of comparable two-parent families (\$940). (Table 5.2)

<sup>13</sup> Included in this latter category are children who, during the reference week, were in school all the time the parent worked or studied, as well as children whose non-school hours were spent in transit to and from school, in the hospital, or in sports, music lessons or activities not included as child care.

<sup>14</sup> Source: Lero, D.S., H. Goelman, A.R. Pence, and L.M. Brockman, Canadian National Child Care Study, unpublished data.



Table 5.1

## Main method of child care used other than school, by age of child, 1988

	Children aged				
	Less than 3 years	3-5 years	Total less than 6 years	6-12 years	Total less than 13 years
	%				
Parents	26.6	26.7	26.6	29.4	28.3
While working	10.1	10.2	10.1	7.6	8.6
By spouse/partner	16.5	16.5	16.5	21.8	19.6
Relatives	23.9	16.1	19.7	10.7	14.4
Unrelated caregivers	37.0	30.7	33.6	15.8	23.1
Regulated/organized care <sup>1</sup>	12.3	24.2	18.7	5.1	10.6
Self or sibling	--	--	--	23.4	14.1
No arrangement <sup>2</sup>	--	--	--	15.6	9.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Total children (000s)</b>	<b>496</b>	<b>577</b>	<b>1,073</b>	<b>1,561</b>	<b>2,633</b>

<sup>1</sup> Includes kindergarten and nursery schools, daycare centres, before/after school care, and licensed family day care.

<sup>2</sup> Includes children who, during the reference week, were in school all the time the parent worked or studied, as well as children whose non-school hours were spent in transit to and from school, in the hospital, or in sports, music lessons or activities not included as child care.

Source: Lero, D.S., H. Goelman, A.R. Pence, and L.M. Brockman, *Canadian National Child Care Study*, unpublished data.

Table 5.2

## Annual family expenditures for child care, 1987

	Total families	Median expenses \$	Median % of income
All families with:			
Pre-school-aged children <sup>1</sup>	941,900	2,000	4.9
School-aged children <sup>2</sup>	855,200	1,000	2.4
Age of youngest child			
0-17 months	247,600	1,500	3.9
18-35 months	273,300	2,000	5.2
3-5 years	421,000	2,050	5.2
6-9 years	501,600	1,000	2.8
10-12 years	353,600	800	1.8
Lone-parent families with:			
Pre-school-aged children <sup>1</sup>	115,100	1,680	11.8
School-age children <sup>2</sup>	158,700	1,060	6.0
Two-parent families with:			
Pre-school aged children <sup>1</sup>	826,900	2,000	4.4
School-aged children <sup>2</sup>	696,500	940	1.8

<sup>1</sup> At least one child under age 6.

<sup>2</sup> Youngest child aged 6-12.

Source: Lero, D.S., H. Goelman, A.R. Pence, and L.M. Brockman, *Canadian National Child Care Study*, unpublished data.

## SECTION 6: TIME ALLOCATION

### Still responsible for housework

Women who are active in the workplace are still primarily responsible for household duties. In 1986, employed women spent almost an hour and a half more per day<sup>15</sup> than men performing unpaid household work, including domestic work, primary child care, and shopping. That year, employed women spent 3.2 hours per day on these activities, compared to only 1.8 hours for men. (Chart 6.1)

The domestic labour component of total unpaid work accounts for much of this difference. In 1986, employed women spent an average of 1.9 hours per

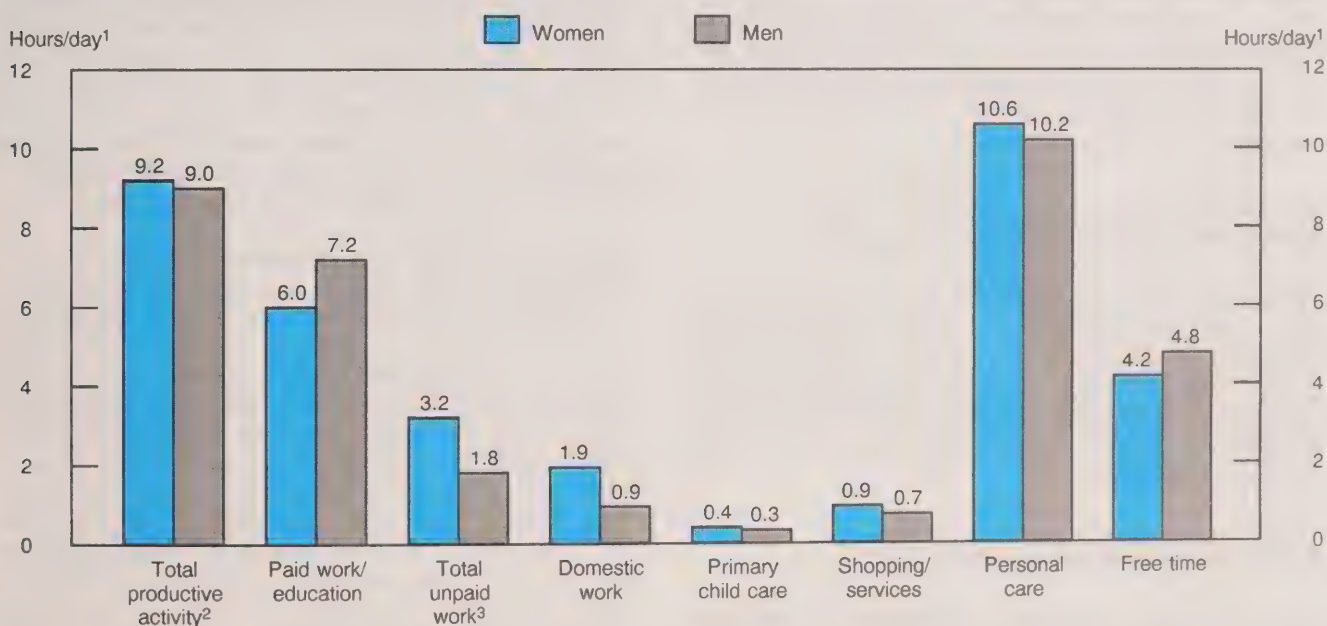
day doing domestic work, versus 0.9 hours for men. These women also allocated more time per day than men to shopping and services (0.9 hours versus 0.7 hours) and slightly more time to primary child care (0.4 hours versus 0.3 hours)<sup>16</sup>.

<sup>15</sup> Averaged over a seven-day week.

<sup>16</sup> It should be noted that the time use information discussed in this section includes only the respondent's main or primary activity at any one time. To the extent that many household activities, such as child care, are actually done simultaneously with other activities, it is likely that time devoted to these secondary activities is under-reported.

Chart 6.1

### Average time spent on selected activities by employed women and men, 1986



<sup>1</sup> Figures averaged over a seven-day week.

<sup>2</sup> Includes paid work, education, and total unpaid work.

<sup>3</sup> Includes domestic work, primary child care, and shopping/services.

Source: Statistics Canada, Catalogue 11-612 and the General Social Survey.

## Women working at home

For many women, especially those with children, looking after the household is their main work activity. In fact, depending on their family status, female homemakers spent up to eight hours per day on unpaid household activities in 1986. These women, however, are not currently included in the workforce totals estimated by the Labour Force Survey.

In 1986, dual-parent mothers with pre-school-aged children spent 7.7 hours per day doing unpaid household work, while the figure was 6.5 hours for comparable lone mothers. As the youngest child reaches school-age, the time

devoted to unpaid domestic tasks declines due to a reduction in the time spent on primary child care activities. Still, women in two-parent families whose youngest child was aged 5 and over spent 6.5 hours per day on unpaid work and their lone-parent counterparts, 5.8 hours. The allocation of time to unpaid work activities further falls to 5.3 hours per day for women with a partner but no children, and to 4.0 hours for childless women living alone. (Table 6.2)

For further reading on the subject of household work, see "The Value of Household Work in Canada, 1986", by Chris Jackson in *Canadian Economic Observer*, Statistics Canada, Catalogue 11-010, June 1992.

However, when total productive activity is considered, that is, all time devoted to paid work, education, and unpaid work, employed women and men work nearly the same amounts of time. In 1986, women spent an average of 9.2 hours per day on productive activities, versus 9.0 hours for comparable men. Given that women do more unpaid work, it follows that the productive activity of employed men is more heavily-oriented towards paid work. Indeed, in 1986, women devoted an average of 6.0 hours per day to paid work and education, compared to 7.2 hours for men.

## Less free time, more personal care

Employed women generally have less free time than their male counterparts. In 1986, working women averaged about 4.2 hours of free time per day, compared to 4.8 hours for men. On the other hand, employed women devoted nearly half an hour more per day than men to personal care activities such as sleeping and eating.

## Time use and marital/family status

The time-use patterns of employed women are heavily influenced by their marital status and by the presence and age of children. Corresponding with the time allocation pattern of working women in

general, employed women with a partner<sup>17</sup> and children devote relatively large amounts of time to unpaid work. Indeed, almost half of the total work activity of these women in 1986 consisted of unpaid household work. (Table 6.1)

As well, these women allocated at least twice as much time as comparable fathers to unpaid household duties. Employed women with a partner and at least one child under age five spent 4.9 hours per day performing these tasks, versus 2.4 hours for comparable men. Similarly, when the youngest child was aged 5 or over, total unpaid household work accounted for 4.2 hours in the average day of women, compared with just 2.0 hours for men.

Employed women with a partner and children also spend somewhat more time on household work activities than comparable female lone parents or childless women. And while these employed mothers in two-parent families allocate less time to paid work and education than any other comparable group, they still have less free time per day. In 1986, employed women with a partner and at least one child under age 5 had almost half an hour a day less leisure time than comparable men or lone mothers, while the difference was around an hour per day for those women with children aged 5 and over. Similarly, employed mothers in two-parent families had over half an hour a day less free time than employed women with a partner but no children.

<sup>17</sup> Includes both married and cohabiting women.



Table 6.1

## Average time spent on selected activities by employed women and men, by family status, 1986

	Total productive activity <sup>1</sup>	Total paid work/ education	Total unpaid work <sup>2</sup>	Domestic work	Primary child care	Shopping/ services	Personal care	Free time
Hours per day <sup>3</sup>								
Those w/children under age 5 <sup>4</sup>								
Female lone parents	9.1	5.6	3.5	1.8	1.1	0.6	10.9	4.0
Women w/partner	9.8	4.9	4.9	2.4	1.6	0.8	10.6	3.6
Men w/partner	10.1	7.7	2.4	0.8	0.9	0.6	10.0	3.9
Those w/children aged 5 or over <sup>5</sup>								
Female lone parents	9.4	6.0	3.4	2.1	0.4	0.9	10.2	4.4
Women w/partner	10.1	5.9	4.2	2.6	0.5	1.0	10.4	3.6
Men w/partner	9.3	7.3	2.0	1.0	0.2	0.7	10.1	4.6
Those w/o children								
Women living alone	8.8	6.3	2.5	1.3	0.2	1.0	10.5	4.7
Women w/partner	9.0	6.1	2.9	1.9	0.2	0.9	10.8	4.1
Men living alone	8.7	7.1	1.6	0.9	0.0	0.7	10.2	5.1
Men w/partner	8.6	7.1	1.6	0.9	0.0	0.6	10.5	4.8

<sup>1</sup> Includes paid work, education, and unpaid work; subtotals may not add due to rounding.<sup>2</sup> Includes domestic work, primary child care, and shopping and services.<sup>3</sup> Figures averaged over a seven-day week.<sup>4</sup> At least one child under age 5.<sup>5</sup> Youngest child aged 5 or over.

Source: Statistics Canada, Catalogue 11-612, and the General Social Survey.

Table 6.2

## Average time spent on selected activities by women keeping house, by family status, 1986

	Total productive activity <sup>1</sup>	Total paid work/ education	Total unpaid work <sup>2</sup>	Domestic work	Primary child care	Shopping/ services care	Personal care	Free time
Hours per day <sup>3</sup>								
Those w/children under age 5 <sup>4</sup>								
Female lone parents	7.0	0.5	6.5	3.3	2.2	1.0	10.6	6.3
Women w/partner	8.2	0.5	7.7	3.6	3.0	1.1	11.0	4.8
Those w/children aged 5 or over <sup>5</sup>								
Female lone parents	6.5	0.8	5.8	3.8	0.7	1.3	11.1	6.4
Women w/partner	7.2	0.7	6.5	4.1	0.9	1.5	11.3	5.5
Those w/o children								
Women living alone	4.2	0.1	4.0	2.9	0.0	1.0	11.9	7.9
Women w/partner	5.6	0.3	5.3	3.9	0.2	1.3	11.7	6.8

<sup>1</sup> Includes paid work, education, and unpaid work; subtotals may not add due to rounding.<sup>2</sup> Includes domestic work, primary child care, and shopping and services.<sup>3</sup> Figures averaged over a seven-day week.<sup>4</sup> At least one child under age 5.<sup>5</sup> Youngest child aged 5 or over.


Source: Statistics Canada, Catalogue 11-612, and the General Social Survey.

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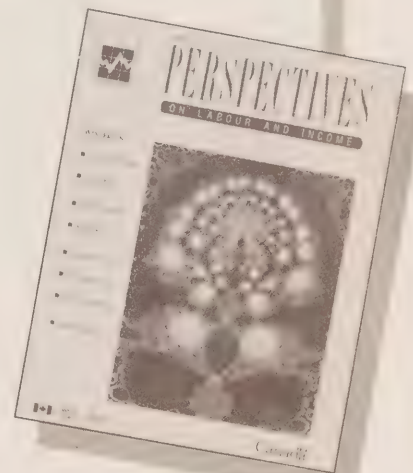
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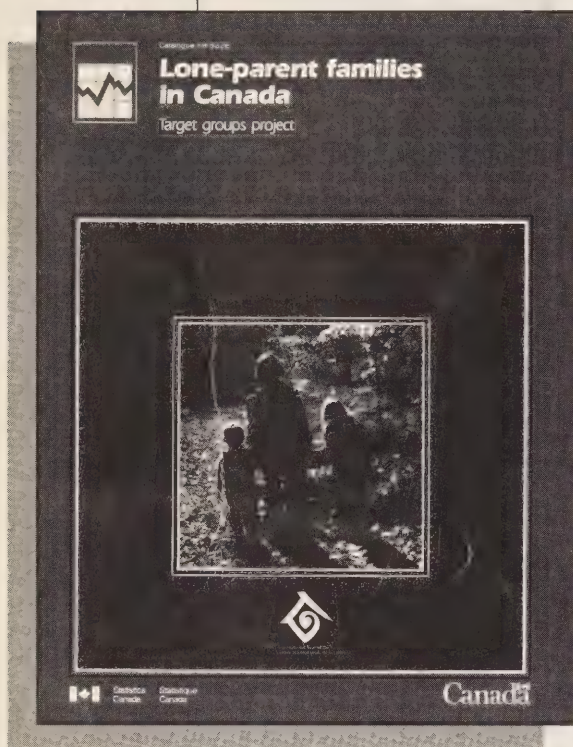
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